





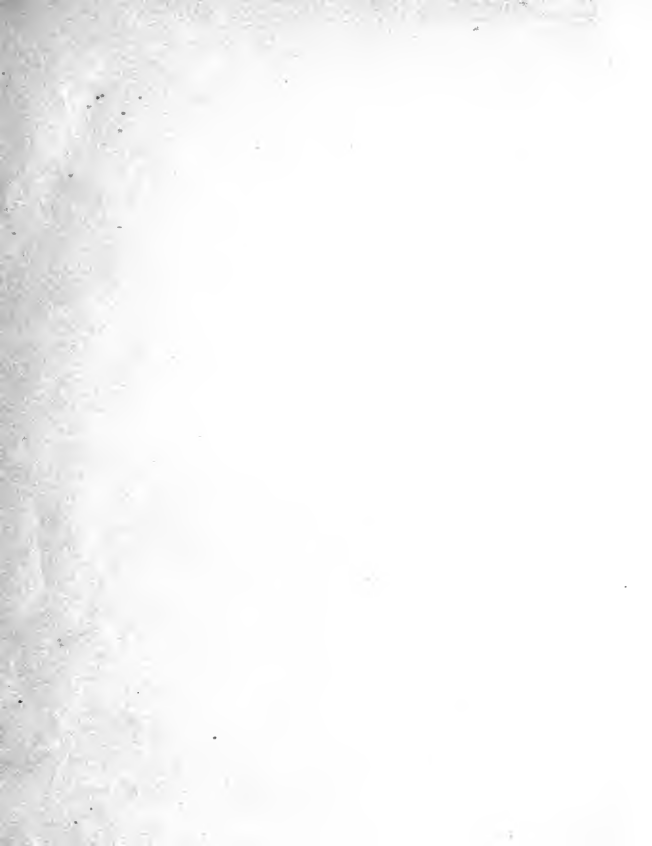
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THE OLD OAK TREE. Page 17.

HAPPY HOURS





HAPPY HOURS;

OR,

THE HOME STORY-BOOK.

BY

MARY CHERWELL.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM DESIGNS BY GILBERT.

NEW YORK:

C. S. FRANCIS & CO., 252 BROADWAY.

BOSTON:

J. H. FRANCIS & CO., WASHINGTON STREET.

1851.

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HAPPY HOURS;

OR,

THE HOME STORY-BOOK.

THE OLD OAK-TREE.

It was in the first month of the year, and on the first day of that month—New-year's day—that two little boys, George and Edward Howard, were seen wending their way through one of the quiet lanes in the neighbourhood of Cranford. It was one of those bright joyous mornings known only at that season of the year.

The air was clear and bracing; the

branches of an avenue of trees, interwoven overhead, and covered with white rime, appeared like a roof of lace work ; here and there, in the hollows of the road, were seen pools of frozen water, which, a stray gleam of sunshine would cause to shine like mirrors ; while the white frost, with which the grass was clad, glistened with the brilliancy of countless gems. The two boys I have mentioned cheerfully pursued their way ; their shrill voices and merry laughter ringing again through the light morning air. Edward, who was by one year the younger of the two, was carrying a parcel, carefully packed in brown paper, and his brother George was jumping nimbly backward and forward over the ditches which skirted

the road: or sliding on any pieces of ice which fell in his way, till his face glowed with health and exercise.

“Ah! I wish I were as warm as you are, George,” cried Edward; “I declare my fingers are quite cold with carrying this parcel. I wonder why Uncle Philip wished us particularly to bring it.”

“Well if you are cold Edward,” said his brother, “why not run about as I do. See, here is a capital slide just before us; put the parcel down for a moment, and take a run with me.”

“No, it is not worth while to stop now,” said Edward, “for you know you must carry the parcel half the distance. That old oak-tree is just half way between our house and Uncle Philip’s: when

we reach that I shall have done my portion."

"I mean to carry it half way, and only half way," returned George; "and I am certain that that tree is not the place; for you know very well, Edward, that Thomas the gardener told us the other day he had measured the distance, and the half mile was ten yards on the other side of the oak."

"I don't care what Thomas fancies," cried Edward; "I know that every one else says the tree is half way, and I shall carry the parcel there and no further."

At the beginning of this conversation, George had been on the point of offering to carry the parcel the remainder of the distance; but, no sooner did his brother

tell him that he expected him to carry it half way, than he obstinately resolved not to do so ; merely, as he said, because he would not be dictated to by a younger brother. Edward, feeling convinced that he had done his share, determined, with equal obstinacy, not to yield the point.

I am afraid from what has been said about the two brothers, that my young readers will fancy them to have been very obstinate, quarrelsome boys, but such was not generally the case. They were good-tempered and obliging to all their friends, kind to their poorer neighbours, and, except on one point, seldom disagreed with one another ; but each had a foolish pride about being directed to do anything by

the other; and when that feeling happened to be aroused, you could not have found two more obstinate little fellows in the whole village of Cranford. Their Uncle had, on the morning to which this tale refers, come to pass the day with their father; and had asked his nephews to go to the Grange, which was the name of his residence, and bring him a parcel, which he expected would be left there by the coach: the boys, who always delighted to oblige their Uncle in any way, had cheerfully set out on their errand. Just before they reached the Grange, the coachman had left the parcel, and with it they started, on their return home—we have seen with what success.

Arrived at the Oak-tree, Edward as-

sented that he had fulfilled his share of the distance; set down his load, and refused to carry it a step further.

“Well, a nice tale you will have to tell Uncle Philip when you reach home,” said George; “for I declare I will not touch the parcel till you have carried it ten yards further.” “I shall tell my Uncle I have done my duty,” said Edward; “I do not intend to touch it again.”

“Neither will I,” cried George.

And at length off they walked, actually leaving their Uncle's property under the tree, to any chance that might await it. After walking a few paces in silence, George began to feel rather ashamed of the part he had been taking, and had his brother shown any concession, he would

willingly have turned back. Nearly the same thoughts were passing through Edward's mind. "After all," he thought, "it was only ten yards, and I might as well have given up: I would go back now only I do not like to seem to yield first." But as they walked on in silence, of course neither knew the other's thoughts, and in a few minutes more they stood empty-handed before their Uncle. "Well, my dear boys," said Uncle Philip, looking up from the newspaper he was reading, "now what success, what news of the parcel? I trust the coachman has not disappointed me."

"N—n—o," stammered George, "it came by the coach."

"Ah! that's right; I am glad it is come

but bring it here, then. Why—Eh? where have you put it?”

George and Edward glanced at one another; then held down their heads, and looked as confused and foolish as possible; but neither of them spoke.

Uncle Philip was puzzled: “Perhaps they did not care to oblige me,” he thought. “Why, George—Edward!” he said, looking hurt and offended, “if I had known that you considered it too much trouble to execute a little commission for me, I would not have asked.”—“Oh no, uncle, no, indeed, we did not think it a trouble: we are always glad to do anything to please you; but—but”—they could get no further: neither wished to complain of the other, for each knew he

had been behaving very foolishly. Their father at this moment entered the room, and knowing his sons' failings, had very little difficulty in discovering how matters stood.

"I am sorry to find," said Mr. Howard seriously, "that notwithstanding all I have said to you on the subject, you still continue to indulge in such feelings. On you particularly as the elder, George, I had hoped my advice would have had more effect."—"Oh indeed it was my fault as much as George's," said Edward.—"No, no," cried George, "I was most to blame; I feel I have been very foolish and very obstinate: I will run back directly and fetch the parcel."—"No, George," said Mr. Howard, "your uncle

will not trouble you again ; with his permission I will send a messenger, who I doubt not will prove more trustworthy." He then rang the bell, and after describing the spot in which he would find it, desired the servant to go in quest of the forsaken parcel. John found it exactly as the boys had left it, and soon returning placed it before uncle Philip ; who in the mean time had been conversing apart with Mr. Howard. " You leave the matter in my hands then," said the latter, as they returned to the boys. The fact was, Uncle Philip was very fond of his nephews, and had intended to surprise them by a New-year's gift ; and though at first vexed at what he justly thought not only obstinacy but want of proper attention

and respect to himself, yet now that he saw how foolish and mortified they looked, he almost thought them already sufficiently punished. But in compliance with a wish their father had expressed, he agreed to let him proceed in the affair as he thought best.

Mr. Howard took a knife, cut the strings of the parcel, removed the outer covering, and drew forth two small packages; on the first was written—"Master George Howard," and on the second—"Master Edward Howard, with their Uncle Philip's love." "These," said their father, "your uncle had kindly intended as presents to you both." The boys looked up, Mr. Howard removed the paper which covered them, and there

stood two of the neatest little desks in the world ! Uncle Philip fidgeted about, blew his nose, placed his hands under his coat-tails, and walked to the window. I really think he longed to interfere ; he seemed vexed that what he had intended as a pleasant surprise for his nephews, should through their ill conduct have been the cause of all the present disquietude. “ They were, I say, intended for you,” continued Mr. Howard ; “ but, as you have allowed your foolish pride so far to get possession of you, as not only to cause you to disagree, but also to commit a breach of trust, (for though the two desks were intended for you, yet at the time you could not have known what property of your uncle’s you

were leaving to the chance of being lost;) I have resolved"—“Yes, yes, there—there—that will do, Papa,” interrupted Uncle Philip, “they will be good boys in future; they will not do the same again.”

“It is to prevent such a repetition, my dear brother,” said Mr. Howard, “that I must now stand in the way of your kind intentions. Having proved yourselves,” he said, again addressing George and Edward, “unworthy of your uncle’s kindness, I must beg that he will take back with him the desks which he so kindly designed for you. He will no doubt find some, amongst his young friends, who will be glad to accept them; and who, instead of quarrelling as to which can do least, will rather strive

which can do most, to oblige the other.”
“Oh! I really think now you are too hard upon them,” whispered Uncle Philip; “remember, young people will be young people, boys will be boys.”

“But we must strive to make them good boys,” said Mr. Howard. “No, my dear brother! I am sorry that my sons have not proved themselves deserving of your kindness. You will oblige me by taking back the desks: we will say nothing further on the subject.”

I shall not tell my readers whether this lesson made a proper impression on George and Edward; I shall leave them to guess. Thus much however I will say: About six months after the occurrence of the events I have just related, was Uncle

Philip's birthday. Mr. Howard and his sons passed the day with him, and a very merry day they made of it; and when the boys took their departure for the night, each was observed to carry under his arm a parcel, about half the size of that which they had left six months before, beneath the Old Oak-Tree.

THE WHITE PIGEON.

IN some remote part of Ireland there formerly stood a fine old castle, in which castle dwelt a widow lady, the mother of an only son. I have forgotten the lady's name, so will call her Lady O'N.; but the little boy's, I remember well, was Desmond.

Lady O'N. was doatingly fond of her little boy; but in spite of all her affection, she did not quite understand the right method of making him happy. It is true she surrounded him with every indulgence

in her power to procure ; humoured all his childish caprices ; and could not endure that any one should for a moment oppose him. All the servants in the castle were expected to consult the wishes and attend to the orders of little Master Desmond, with as much deference as if he had been a sensible considerate man, instead of a thoughtless troublesome child. His temper, as you may suppose, was very much spoilt by all this indulgence and attention ; indeed, by the time he was six years of age, he had grown so self-willed and overbearing, he could not put up with the slightest contradiction or disappointment.

Now, in a rude hut, distant about a mile from the castle, dwelt a poor old

man who had known many sorrows. His three sons had fallen in battle, and a grand-daughter, the child of his last surviving son, who, he had hoped, would have been spared to be the joy and consolation of his old age, had also been taken from him within a year after her father's death.

The poor old man was very sad and melancholy, and the only thing which now seemed to give him pleasure, was to feed and pet a gentle white pigeon which had belonged to his poor Norah.

The lady at the castle, who was a gentle and charitable dame, pitying the solitary old man, had often called to see his little grand-daughter when she lay ill, and had sent delicacies from the castle for

the sick child, which he could not have afforded to purchase. On one of her visits to the lone hut, she had taken her little son Desmond with her, and the old man, desirous to amuse the little boy as well as he was able, had taken him round his little garden, in which he cultivated a few roots and herbs; and, amongst other things, had shown him poor Norah's pretty favourite. It was a few days after that visit that the little girl died.

Unfortunately for the good old man, it happened, about the same time, that young Master Desmond, in spite of the constant efforts of all in the castle to amuse and keep him in good-humour, was at more than usual loss for amusement. Rain fell almost incessantly for



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several days, and he was not able to enjoy any of his out-of-door pleasures. He could not have a ramble in the woods, or a gallop on his own little black pony, neither could he go out on the beautiful lake which extended in front of the castle, where his mama kept a little boat purposely for his use; and in fine weather he was rowed about on the clear bright water whenever he liked.

“What can we do, Bridget, to amuse the dear boy this dull morning?” said Lady O’N. on one of these rainy days, to a young woman who was working with her at an embroidery frame.

Mistress Bridget suggested, first one thing and then another—nothing, however, that Desmond was particularly dis-

posed to do or be pleased with. But as his mother continued to talk about his little important self, he sat down on a cushion at her feet, and, leaning his face on both his hands, looked very thoughtful for a minute or two. If a book had been on his knee you would have fancied he was learning his lesson very attentively, but Desmond, though he lived in a splendid mansion, and was dressed and tended like a little prince, was as ignorant as any of the rough-looking little children who played barefoot about the doors of the peasants' huts: he did not even know his letters. There were not, to be sure, so many pretty little books in those days as there are now, to tempt little boys and girls to study, and reward them for the

pains they take in learning to read. But what, then, was passing in Desmond's mind that he leant his head on his hand, and looked so grave? Perhaps he was thinking what he could do to give pleasure to his kind mama, who loved him so dearly. No: little Desmond was thinking only of himself. Presently he jumped up, and, with a bright smile on his face, which delighted his mama and made her clasp him in her arms and kiss him fondly, he cried, "Oh I have thought of what I should like to amuse me." He fancied he had done something very clever in finding this out for himself. "I should like the pretty white pigeon," he continued, "mama, do you remember, that the old man showed me, the day you took me with you to his

hut?" "Yes, my darling," said his mother, "and I dare say the poor old man will be very willing to sell it. I will send to him this morning; it will be a charming pet for you. And now run and ask Michael to look out a nice little house for the pretty bird to roost in." Off ran little Desmond, in high glee, to find Michael, and Lady O'N. immediately summoned one of her servants, and putting money in his hand, desired him to go to the hut of the old peasant and give him whatever he asked for his white pigeon, as Master Desmond wished to possess it.

The servant accordingly set off, and, finding the old man in his hut, told him on what errand he had come. To his surprise, the old man steadily refused to

part with his bird. The servant, knowing how serious a matter it was to disappoint Master Desmond of anything to which he took a fancy, offered him a sum more than treble the value of the pigeon. But the old man sadly replied "That, and ten times more, would not buy this poor bird of me. I do not want gold; this hut will shelter me while I live; but the pigeon my poor Norah loved, and that used to feed from her hand, I cannot part with."

The servant saw that the old man was in earnest, and that it would be in vain to urge him further. He therefore went back to the castle to tell his lady of his ill success.

Lady O'N. was very much disap-

pointed to see him return empty-handed ; but when she heard how much the poor old man valued his ^{star} pigeon, she felt that it would be quite cruel to wish any longer to deprive him of it. The next thing to be done was to break the news to little Desmond. He had heard that the servant was come back, who had been sent to the old man's dwelling, and now came running into the room, crying eagerly, "Where is my pigeon ?—O let me see my pigeon !"

"Come to me, my love," said Lady O'N. ; "come and listen to a sorrowful little story I have to tell you. When you have heard it, I am sure you will not wish any longer for the poor old man's bird."

“I do not want to hear a story!” cried the spoilt child; and burst out a crying, as he was accustomed to do whenever he could not get what he wished. “I do not care about anything if I cannot have the white pigeon.”

It was of no use that his mama tried to make him feel pity, by talking to him about the grief of the poor old man, and explaining to him why he could not part with his grand-daughter's favourite pet. Desmond would not attend to any thing she said, but kept crying and sobbing, and insisting on the pigeon being got for him. This could not be done; but Lady O'N., lamenting his disappointment, tried to divert him in every way she could think of. It was all in

vain. Desmond was so little of the habit of bearing disappointment, that nothing they were able to give or promise him could make him forget the pretty white pigeon he had so much set his mind on having. When at length his passion was exhausted and he could not cry any more, he sat down sullenly in a corner, and would not speak or take notice of anybody. At dinner-time much to the concern of his mama, he would not eat anything; in short, he continued in this comfortless humour the rest of the day, and when evening came, after the manner of sorrowing children, sobbed himself to sleep. Lady O'N. hoped he would think less about it on the morrow; but, alas! he arose the next morning in the

same disconsolate mood. He would not play; he would not smile; he would not speak. Lady O'N. felt quite unhappy; she feared he would fret himself into a fever, and began to reproach herself for having indulged her little boy so foolishly. She could not, however, bear the thoughts of his making himself ill, and, since nothing but the possession of the pretty white pigeon would pacify him, she resolved to go herself to the hut of the old peasant, and see what could be done about the matter.

Without telling Desmond of her intention, for fear of another disappointment, she set off. On reaching the old man's hut, she found him engaged in supplying his favourite with a cup of

fresh water. When he saw the lady, however, he came forward respectfully, though with his usually sad aspect, to greet her. With much reluctance she made him acquainted with the object of her visit; telling him how inconsolable her little boy was, because he had not been able to obtain the pretty white pigeon he had once seen at that spot, and how much she feared that fretting after it would make him ill.

The poor old man now felt very much perplexed. He would not have *sold* his favourite at any price: but, calling to remembrance the good lady's kindness to his grand-daughter, he felt it would be ungrateful to refuse her what she thought necessary for *her* child's comfort.

So, after keeping silence for a moment or two, he replied, in a sorrowful tone, "You shall have the pigeon, good Madam, since Master Desmond has so much set his heart on it." The old man spoke almost with tears in his eyes, and Lady O'N., who saw how great a trial it was for him to part with his bird, felt quite ashamed of her little boy's selfishness. She assured him, however, that Desmond would take great care of the pretty pigeon when it was in his possession, and, should he grow tired of it, which, in less than a month, might very likely be the case, she would return it in safety to its old abode. Then, thanking the old man for the sacrifice he made for the sake of her little son, she left the hut, after the old

man had promised to bring the pigeon himself to the castle in the course of an hour or two.

Little Desmond, who had never waited so long and so hopelessly for anything he wanted before, was almost wild with joy when, on Lady O'N.'s return home, she informed him that the pretty white pigeon would soon be his own. Even his mama almost forgot the sadness of the old man, and the selfishness of the child, in her delight at seeing the rosy colour return to his cheeks, and happy smiles again brightening his face.

"And when will it be here, dear mama?" cried Desmond, as he clasped his arms round his mother's neck.

"Not till the afternoon, I dare say,

love," said Lady O'N., for she thought of the reluctance with which the poor old man would doubtlessly set out on his errand.

But it was no longer a difficult matter to keep little Desmond in good humour; and joyous and happy in the prospect of having his wish gratified, we will leave him for a little time and go back to the humble dwelling of the poor peasant.

The good old man, though it was such grief to him to part with his bird, had no thought of delaying the fulfilment of his promise; but as soon as the lady had left the hut, prepared to carry his treasure to its new home.

The pretty pigeon, ignorant of all that was to befall it, was fluttering gaily about

its perch, its white wings gleaming in the sunshine; but when the old man came near, it flew down, and alighted on his out-stretched hand. Very gently, he put the tame little bird into a small wicker-basket, and carefully tied down the lid; then, with his oaken-staff in one hand, and imprisoned pet in the other, took his way forthwith to the castle.

When he arrived there, the porter, who usually opened the outer-gate, happened to be out of the way; but a stupid-looking boy came forward to ask what he wanted.

This boy, whose name was Michael, could seldom deliver any order or direction in the words he received it; or

I should rather say, he rarely comprehended the purport of what was said to him; and, in repeating a message, generally left out, or added something, so as to completely alter its sense. His want of understanding had been the cause of so many droll mistakes, that it was sometimes suspected that there was some lurking love of mischief joined to his dulness and stupidity. However this might be, it was the old man's ill-luck to give the basket, containing his precious pigeon, into the hands of this urchin. He left it with a simple message, saying, he had brought the bird Master Desmond so longed for, and begged Michael to carry it carefully and present it to him immediately. The boy promised to do

so; and the old man stood for a moment gazing mournfully at his treasure, as Michael bore it away. He then turned to retrace his steps homeward, unconscious as the poor bird itself of the fate that awaited it within the castle.

The old man had no sooner departed, than the stupid boy hurried to the castle kitchen with the basket, and opening the lid, said, "See, here is a fine plump little pigeon, which is to be dressed immediately for Master Desmond's dinner. He was crying for one all day yesterday, and the old man who brought this here, said my lady ordered it herself."

The cook looked with compassion at the poor little white pigeon, which lay at the bottom of the basket, very frightened

at the strange faces that were peering in on it, and said, "it was a thousand pities to kill such a pretty gentle bird; but, to be sure, Master Desmond must have everything he wanted."

That day little Desmond scarcely cared to obey the summons to dinner. He was so impatient to see the pretty white pigeon, which his mama was promising would arrive every moment, that he could think of nothing else. Poor bird! it arrived at last in a very different state from what he expected. The little, living, fluttering pigeon, which Desmond had so much wished to possess, and the old man had parted with so reluctantly, neither of them ever saw again.

"What dainty have we here?" said

Lady O'N., as a small silver dish was placed before Desmond; in the centre of which appeared a little bird delicately dressed.

"It is the pigeon, Madam," said the servant in reply. Desmond opened his eyes very wide, and looked in great amazement, first at the dish before him, and then at his mother.

"The pigeon! what pigeon?" cried Lady O'N., hastily; dreading that some mistake had occurred.

The servant explained, that an old man, about two hours before, had brought a pretty little white pigeon to the castle, which, he said, Master Desmond was to have as soon as possible; and the cook, accordingly, had dressed it immediately, in great haste.

“O, Desmond,” cried Lady O’N., reproachfully, “It is the old man’s bird. O, what grief he will be in when he hears of the fate of his poor little pet. If you had not so selfishly wished to deprive him of his treasure, the pretty pigeon would now be fluttering on its perch, as gaily as it was this morning, when I begged him, for your sake, to let me have it.”

Little Desmond began to cry very much, partly for his own disappointment, but partly also for the old man, and partly because his mama had never spoken to him in a tone of so much displeasure before.

I never heard what the poor old man said, or how much grieved he appeared

when he was told of the fate of his pigeon. One good, however, resulted from Michael's unfortunate mistake. Lady O'N. resolved to teach her little boy to consider the feelings of others more than she had hitherto done; and Desmond, I am happy to say, became, in a little time, a more amiable, as well as a happier boy

THE SCHOOLFELLOWS.

ARMYTAGE HOUSE was a large, old-fashioned, Gothic building; over which the ivy grew with such luxuriance, that its small windows were rendered smaller still, so deeply were they embedded in their verdant mantle. In front of the house was a neatly laid-out garden, where there were none of your fanciful fountains or mimic heaps of rock-work, which, by their presumptuous imitation of nature, only serve to remind us of their insignificance. No, there was nothing of

the kind in the garden of Armytage House. The paths were smooth and dry, the box edgings were cut with the greatest nicety, and the beds which they surrounded were filled in summer with an abundance of sweet-smelling flowers ; now, however, the bare stems alone remained, save that one or two sickly rose-buds had struggled into bloom against the inclemency of the season. Two tall yew-trees, cut into trim shapes, overshadowed the garden-gate, on which was seen a brass plate bearing this inscription, “ Dr. Meanwell’s Classical Academy.”

But I will not detain my readers by a lengthened description of the outside of the house, for though I am an old lady

now, yet I recollect well that I always made a point of skipping any long accounts of verdant slopes, flowery meads, or storied piles, which I met with in the story books which my kind mama presented to me when I was a little girl. So, if my young friends will kindly join me, we will step in at once, and see what is going on in Dr. Meanwell's school-room.

It is Wednesday, a half-holiday, and the fifth of November. The Doctor is seated at a high desk, from which he can see that his young subjects are paying proper attention to their various studies. He is dressed in black, and by his side lies a cane, whose only duty it is to give a smart tap-tap on the desk, whenever it

does not suit him to raise his voice to enjoin silence ; for the full penalty of the law, flogging, is never resorted to at Armytage House. The Doctor is looking grave, for the boys of the first Latin class are repeating their lesson—it is finished. The morning has passed satisfactorily ; the boys have been as attentive as most boys can be ; and the Doctor smiles blandly around him, and is preparing to dismiss them to the play-ground, when suddenly a titter is heard at the further end of the long desk which runs down the whole length of the school-room.

“ Silence ! ” cried Doctor Meanwell.
“ Boys, it is now twelve o’clock ; your conduct to-day has pleased me much,

you have been steady and attentive, and, as nothing gives me greater pleasure than to see you happy, I shall consent to the request you made this morning: as soon as it is dark, the bonfire shall be lighted, and the fireworks commence. But mark me: there must be no playing with the fireworks. The gardener will superintend the festivities; and—" Here the Doctor paused; for from the same end of the desk, whose occupants had been called to order at the commencement of his speech, there proceeded the sound of smothered laughter.

The Doctor removed the spectacles from his nose, and sent an inquiring glance to the corner whence these disrespectful sounds proceeded. "Young

gentleman," he exclaimed, "what is the reason of this interruption?" The boys returned no answer; but, directed by the glance of many a merry pair of laughter-loving eyes, he soon discovered that the cause was no other than a rough portrait sketched on the wall with a blackened cork, by some precocious draughtsman.

"Heyday! what have we here?" said Doctor Meanwell, who in the innocence of his heart, at first supposed it to be a representation of the popular Guy Faux, but, on a nearer inspection the truth began to break upon him. Could it be! Yes, it certainly was, a caricature-likeness of himself—yes, there were his spectacles and his bald head; and even the little wart which had taken up its abode on

his time-honoured nose, - was faithfully portrayed.

Now, the Doctor had a great dislike of ridicule in any shape. He always checked it when displayed by his pupils upon one another; and it was not to be expected that he would endure it with particular patience when directed against himself. He threw a searching and inquiring glance along the forms on which his pupils were seated in quest of the delinquent; (for, without asking questions, Doctor Meanwell's quickness of observation often enabled him to detect an offending urchin;) but though many a little cheek was ready to burst with ill-surpressed laughter, on none did he detect any symptoms of em-

barrassment, till his eye fell on Charles Radnor and Arthur Newell. And what were the signs of guilt that there met his penetrating glance? Charles Radnor's eye fell as the Doctor's met his; and little Newell, pencil in hand, pretended to be working most industriously at a sum which his master had told him was right ten minutes before. "Charles Radnor," said the Doctor, "was this your doing?" There was a striking difference in the personal appearance of the two boys, who thus drew Dr. Meanwell's attention. Little Newell, as Arthur was called by his schoolfellows, was of small stature, rendered in walking the more conspicuous from a lameness in one of his feet, the consequence of a fall

received in infancy: he had light curling hair, blue eyes, and a fair complexion; but the glow given by active exercise to the countenance was wanting in his. Charles Radnor, on the contrary, tall of his age, and easy and elegant in form, excelled amongst his companions in the skill and agility required for outdoor sports and games. A strong friendship subsisted between these two boys, which had commenced and increased gradually from the time they had first met at school, notwithstanding they bore no greater resemblance to each other in character than in person. Arthur, the boy of slight and delicate frame, possessed the greater portion of courage and firmness of mind. Quiet and mild in

manner, he had strong and acute feelings, and returned affection with gratitude. Charles was of a more lively disposition, and had less steady principle, but his kindness and goodness of heart made him a general favourite in the school, and by none of his young comrades was he more beloved than by Arthur Newell. Schoolboys are generally thoughtless and high-spirited, and Arthur's lameness often attracted heedless remarks from his companions, who would take an inconsiderate pride in boasting of their strength and agility to one who was quite unable to mingle in any active sport. Charles Radnor had too much consideration for the feelings of his friend ever to make such remarks; and the

gratitude felt towards him by the poor lame boy in return, was great in the extreme.

But with all his kindness of heart, Charles had two great failings—a love of mischief, and yet so great a terror of the punishment consequent upon his own acts, that to screen himself he would often descend to the meanness of telling a falsehood. Yet, let it not be supposed that he sinned thus quite deliberately, or without self-reproach: many and many were the times he had resolved to conquer himself of this fault, “On the next opportunity,” he would think, “I will make a resolute stand against such sinful weakness;” but no sooner did the temptation occur, than it proved too

strong for him, and all his good resolutions vanished in the momentary dread of punishment.

But all this time, Doctor Meanwell's question has been unanswered—"Did you do this, Charles Radnor?"

Need we tell the answer? He had drawn the likeness, or rather the attempt at likeness, but with no intention that it should meet the eye of the original. It was his effort to efface it, unobserved, that first roused the laughter of his companions; no sooner were they silent than he again attempted to remove it; but the laughter of the other boys again drew the Doctor's attention to the spot; and now nothing was wanting, but to discover the mischievous artist. Charles

thought but of the probable punishment that would await him—that he should be confined, solitary, to the house, while the rest of his companions were enjoying the bonfire and fireworks—and the temptation proved too strong for him. All his good resolutions vanished in air, and the ready falsehood released him for the time from the consequences of his fault.

The Doctor passed on to little Newell. “Newell, do you know anything of this?”

“Charles will be doubly punished if I say it was he,” thought Newell; “I would rather endure the blame myself, a hundred times, if it were not for the meanness of telling a falsehood. And yet it will seem so unkind to betray him, and get him into disgrace, when I could

so easily save him. It cannot be so mean or dishonourable to tell an untruth to save one's friend, as telling an ordinary falsehood would be; and see how pale and frightened poor Charles looks! I really cannot tell the Doctor it was his doing." Again the Doctor urged his question. "Was this your doing, Newell?"

Newell still paused: his conscience whispered to him, "Tell the truth." But another glance at the pale face of his friend made him hesitate; and, while he coloured with shame at the act he was committing he stammered out—

"It was, Sir."

Dr. Meanwell looked grieved. "I had hoped," he said, "that as we commenced the day, so we should have finished it,

without one fault calling for serious reproof. As regards the rudeness to myself, I could have overlooked it; but, as master of this school, I should not be doing my duty were I not to insist on a proper degree of respect, more especially as I have resolved to dispense with all corporal punishment. I must own, too, that I feel hurt that any of you, and more especially Newell, whom I have treated with more than usual kindness, should repay my care by striving to cast ridicule upon me. Newell, you will remain in the school-room this afternoon. I am sorry to be obliged to punish you on a day which I hoped would have been one of pleasure to you all. For the rest of you, your lessons are over for the day; amuse

yourselves in making preparations for the evening. There are plenty of materials about. I shall be looking out for a famous bonfire."

Off ran the schoolboys, leaving their solitary companion in possession of the deserted room, which now seemed doubly dreary from the absence of the noise and bustle which had been there but the moment before.

Newell sat sadly, listening to the distant shouts and laughter of his companions, who were busily engaged in piling brushwood, brambles, thorns, or whatever they could lay their hands on, suitable for the bonfire. At no time are the sounds of cheerful sports more tantalizing to the young, than when they are pre-

vented joining in them themselves, and more especially when it has been caused by their own conduct. And as Newell sat listening, gloomily, to the distant sounds, every whoop and shout of laughter but served to depress his spirits more and more. He had another source of regret—the Doctor thought him ungrateful; and Newell, always warm in his affections when kindly treated, was now reproaching himself for having allowed the Doctor to think him forgetful of his attention and kindness. The more he thought upon the matter, the more uneasy he grew. “The Doctor is the best and kindest friend I have,” he cried. “How often has he told us that a falsehood always bears its own punishment

with it! And now he must for ever think me either ungrateful, or guilty of the meanness of telling an untruth."

The thoughts of Charles Radnor were not more enviable than those of his friend. What to him now were the enjoyments of the evening, to which he, in common with his companions had so long looked forward with pleasure? He felt in constant dread that some of his school-fellows, knowing him to be the real offender, might inform the Doctor of his meanness. While all around him were gay and cheerful he stood silent and apart. What mattered it to him now that he should be thought the most active in the playground—the most skilful in his class? He felt that the smallest boy in

the school was his superior—he felt little in his own eyes. Every moment he was inclined to run to the Doctor to tell him the whole truth, and clear his conscience from its stain; but then arose the fear and dread of punishment: and when the opportunity presented itself, he had not sufficient courage or strength of mind to carry out his intentions.

As it grew dusk, the solitary prisoner could hear that the festivities of the evening had commenced. A bright stream of light, which, as it reached the clouds, would burst into sparkling stars, proclaimed when the rushing rocket rose high in air. The sudden flash, and the loud shouts of the schoolboys, told when any firework of great brilliancy was dis-

charged; but broader still grew the light, and louder still the shouts, as the great bonfire suddenly burst forth its flame and smoke. "They are all happy," thought Newell; "and even Radnor, perhaps, enjoys himself and thinks nothing of the sacrifice I have made for his sake." His sorrows were too much for him; he burst into tears and hid his face in his hands, sobbing bitterly.

But surely the bonfire is stronger than ever bonfire was before, for the heat of it seems to reach him even in the room; and it must be the scent of the burning wood and tar which he smells, and the crackling of the brushwood which he hears. See, even the smoke seems to have penetrated the chamber! But why

that sudden shout, followed by as sudden a stillness? It is different from any he has heard before that evening. Again, those are voices which he hears; they must be under the school-room window. And, can it be?—yes, there is his own name shouted—Newell! Newell! and the appalling truth bursts upon him as the cry of fire! fire! resounds through the air.

Newell rushed to the door, but it was too late. A spark from one of the torches (carried from the house for the purpose of lighting the bonfire) had fallen in the hall; the current of air caused by an open door had soon spread and fanned it into a flame. Already the broad staircase was in a blaze, and the volume of smoke which rushed in at the school-room door

drove him back, gasping for breath. He scrambled on to the window-sill, and looked despairingly around him; the height was far too great for a leap, and he well knew that there was no ladder at hand of sufficient length to reach him. Beneath him stood his frightened school-fellows, each shouting to him to escape, and each giving different advice. "Jump, jump, Newell," cried one party. "No, no," cried another; "he would be dashed to pieces. Keep where you are; the Doctor has sent for assistance; we shall have a ladder in a few minutes."

"Silence, all!" cried the commanding voice of the Doctor. "Newell, listen to me: be calm; raise yourself gently from the window; cling firmly to the stout

branches of the ivy, and so let yourself down."

Poor Newell trembled, and his face looked ghastly pale. From his lameness he had generally been prevented from joining in the athletic sports of the other boys, and he had never attempted to climb in his life. "I cannot, I cannot," he cried, as in obedience to the Doctor's directions he strove to make his way from the window. "Courage, courage," cried the Doctor, though his own voice trembled as he spoke, while he saw the feeble efforts made by the poor boy to cling to the ivy.

"It is useless," cried poor Newell; "I feel I have not sufficient strength. It is my own fault that I am here; I am justly

punished. But—but, dear Mr. Meanwell, I was not ungrateful—I was not unmindful of your kindness. I did not—Oh God forgive me!—Do not cry so, dear Charles; you could not know it would come to this. God bless you—bless you all!”

“Oh, Arthur! Arthur! I shall die,” cried his conscience-stricken friend. “Oh Sir, Sir, he was punished for my fault. It was I drew that picture, and I basely allowed Newell to be punished for me. Oh, I have murdered him! But though my repentance may have come too late, still if I cannot save him I can perish with him. I will climb up to the school-room by the ivy, in the same way that you told Newell to descend.” And he rushed forward to carry out his project.

“Stay, stay, rash boy!” cried the Doctor, holding him back; “and yet,” he thought, as he saw the smoke now issuing from the window, “it seems his only chance. Before the gardener returns with the ladder the poor boy may perish. Be firm, Radnor, then,” he said; “be firm: take this rope with you; when you reach the room tie one end of it firmly round Newell’s waist, pass the other round the leg of the desk which is close to the window, and throw it down to us; by that means we can save you both.”

Radnor waited not another instant, but boldly commenced the ascent. Every eye was strained after him, as from branch to branch, and from stem to stem, he drew himself up. Once he paused, and it was

thought his strength was exhausted, but it was only for a moment to recover breath, in the next he had started with renewed vigour, and paused not again till he was by the side of little Newell. Here he followed the Doctor's directions, and in a few minutes both boys were safe from the reach of the devouring flames.

But the excitement, joined to the suffocating heat and smoke, had proved too much for the weak frame of poor Newell, and as he reached the ground the good Doctor caught him fainting in his arms, and bore him to a neighbouring house.

When he returned slowly to consciousness, the flames were nearly subdued by the exertions of the neighbours, and the Doctor and Charles Radnor were bending





anxiously over him, the latter bitterly reproaching himself for his past conduct.

“Is that you, dear Charles?” said Newell, faintly. “Oh, Newell,” cried his friend, “can you ever forgive me for the meanness I have been guilty of; and if you do, can I ever forgive myself?”

“Dear Charles,” said Newell, “do not ask my forgiveness; I have nothing to forgive. If you have done me any wrong, you would have more than repaid it by risking your life to save mine, as you did so bravely but a few moments since.”

“But, my dear boys,” said Doctor Meanwell, “there is indeed ONE of whose forgiveness you both stand in need—ONE whom you have indeed this day grievously

offended. How far better, how far nobler would it have been had you told the truth at once ! You must feel that you have both been much to blame, and that I am indeed right when I say that nothing can serve as an excuse for falsehood ; that in telling an untruth we but fashion a rod for our future punishment. Oh ! before you close your eyes this night, fall down and pray to your Heavenly Father for strength in future to resist every temptation of falsehood."

FREDERICK SEDLEY'S HOLIDAYS.

THE month of June was a time looked forward to with joy by Frederick Sedley and in fact by many other young people of his age; not only because then the fields and hedge-rows would be decked with their gayest flowers, but because there approached, what is dearer to little boys and girls than the bright shining sun, or the prettiest flowers that ever bloomed—the midsummer holidays, when they would see again their kind parents and their own dear little brothers and sisters.

Frederick Sedley was a very good boy; he had gained the prize at school, for good behaviour, and had written home such a pretty letter to tell his dear papa and mama that the academy would break up for the midsummer vacation on the eighteenth, and that his kind Instructor, Mr. Parsons, would bring him home in the coach which passed through Elmsdale, which was the name of the place where Frederick lived.

Very few of the schoolboys wanted calling up on the morning of the eighteenth of June, for the thoughts of home had made them sleep lightly. Frederick was one of the first to rise, and the time seemed to go so slowly, that the boys felt sure the coach must have passed; for it

seemed longer coming that morning than it had ever done before. But no! the clock struck nine, and punctual to its time, up drove the coach that was to convey them home. Then there was such shouting, and clapping of small hands. Only some of the elder boys tried to look grave, because they knew Mr. Parsons was very good to them all, and though they were as pleased as the others to go home, yet they did not like to seem unmindful of his kindness. But Mr. Parsons only smiled kindly upon his noisy pupils; for though he was very fond of them, yet he knew it was only natural for them to prefer home to school.

When Frederick reached home he found his papa and mama and his little

brother and sister, Thomas and Lucy, all waiting to see him. Then he had to display his reward for good conduct, and opened his ciphering-book to show all the long sums he had gone through, till little Lucy held up her hands in surprise at his being able to add up such long puzzling rows of figures.

Now nothing delighted Mr. and Mrs. Sedley so much as to see their children cheerful and happy; and as they were much pleased with Frederick's conduct at school, they asked him what he would like best for his amusement in the holidays. Frederick considered for a moment, for he was not a selfish boy; he did not think of his own amusement only: so he replied, that he should prefer something

that would please his little brother and sister also. "Go, then," said Mr. Sedley, "and consult together." Then there was a great consideration among the young folks to hit upon something which would give enjoyment to them all. At last little Thomas proposed a donkey, and as this pleased all parties, a donkey, it was settled, it should be.

The next morning Mr. Sedley took them to the stable, and there they found one of the nicest donkeys they had ever seen; he had a beautiful saddle and bridle, and looked so sleek and good-tempered, that there really seemed no occasion for the pretty whip which was hanging by his side.

"Now, my dear children," said Mr. Sedley, "I have one thing to mention

which you will be sure to observe: you may ride over the common, and round the orchard and through the fields at the back of the house, but on no account,—and I speak particularly to you, as the eldest, Frederick,—on no account go on the high-road.”

“Oh no, papa, we do not want to ride on the dusty road,” said Frederick; “and we shall be sure not to go there now that we know it is against your wish.”

“Mount, then,” cried Mr. Sedley, “and let us see how you can manage your steed.—Off with you!”

And off went the merry party. First one mounted, and then the other; and on they rode through the fields and lanes, and picked the bright hedge-flowers, and

made wreaths of king cups to put round the donkey's neck ; and the donkey nibbled the grass as he went along, and switched his tail, and seemed quite proud of the fine figure he cut. So they passed day after day, and three happier children were not to be found:

But, I am sorry to say that this happiness was at last suddenly marred, and all through one act of disobedience. You remember that Mr. Sedley had told them on no account to go on the high-road. Well, they all paid great attention to his wishes, till, one morning, when, as they were riding on the common, they were joined by Alfred Faulding, a little boy, the son of one of their father's friends.

After Alfred had patted and admired

the donkey, he began to tell them of all the pretty things he had at home. "Ah!" he said, "I have two such beautiful rabbits, one of them is covered with black and white spots; the other is jet black. You must come and see them, Frederick."

But Frederick said, "No thank you Alfred, not to-day." He did not say the reason, for he was afraid of being laughed at. Little Thomas, however, saved him the trouble, for he said, "Oh! no, indeed, Frederick cannot go without asking papa's leave; for you know, Alfred, he cannot reach your house without passing the road; and papa said we were none of us to go there."

"That is all very well for a little fellow like you, Master Thomas," said Alfred;

“but if I were Frederick, I would not be such a milk-sop as that; I should be ashamed to be tied to mama’s apron-strings, like a great baby.” Frederick was so foolish as to feel quite ashamed of Alfred’s ridicule. “It cannot make much difference,” thought he, “I shall be back again in a minute, and if I do not tell where I have been, papa need know nothing about it.” And Alfred at length persuaded him to ride to his house and look at the rabbits.

They were indeed very pretty rabbits, with long drooping ears, which, Alfred said, were called “lop-ears.” Frederick was quite delighted with them, and could have watched them for hours, as they sat munching the cabbage-stalks which he

gave them. But Alfred having now displayed his treasures, thought it as well for them to be moving back again: "For," he said, "somebody might be sent for you, Frederick; and then I suppose I should have a share of the blame for bringing you here." So they both mounted the donkey at once, and off they started on their way back to the spot where they had left Thomas and Lucy.

"You see, Frederick, you had nothing to be afraid of," said Alfred; "and you might never have seen my beautiful rabbits, if you had minded exactly what your papa told you; and I should like to know what harm was likely to have happened to you?"

Frederick did not feel easy, though he tried to appear so, as he answered, "Oh! I see there was no danger at all." But he spoke rather too soon, for at this moment, when they were within sight of the common, a coach, at full speed, turned the corner of a neighbouring lane. The coachman saw the two boys, but it was too late for him to stop the horses. He shouted to them to get out of the way. Frederick flogged the donkey, and tried with all his might to do so, but in vain. The animal, frightened at the noise, turned round in the middle of the road; in the next instant the coach had passed at full gallop, and Frederick, Alfred, and the donkey were dashed together to the ground. Little Lucy screamed with

terror; but Thomas, although quite as much frightened, had presence of mind enough to run immediately to the house for assistance. Mr. Sedley hastened to the spot, and found Frederick lying quite still in the path by the roadside, where he had been thrown. He raised him in his arms, and carried him to the house, followed by Alfred, who had escaped with scarcely any injury. Though stunned and bruised, it was soon found that Frederick had not been so seriously hurt as was at first feared; but his ankle was sprained, and for several days he was obliged to keep at home and lie quietly on a sofa. When he recovered, there were no more pleasant rides to be had on the donkey, for Mr

Sedley at once sent him back to his former owner. Frederick felt that this punishment of his fault was but just. He regretted the loss of the donkey, but he felt still more sorry to have forfeited his father's confidence by suffering himself to be so easily persuaded to disobey his commands. It was a lesson he never forgot, nor would he ever afterwards allow the sneers or laughter of his companions to turn him from what his conscience told him was right.

COUSIN JOHN'S FIRST STORY.

HERO.

"OH, Cousin John, will you draw me some pretty pictures, if you please, and tell me some amusing stories about them?"

So spoke Willy Franklin, a little fair-haired boy, of some six or seven years old: for nothing amused him more than to sit by his cousin and watch him at his drawings; and when he had finished them, to ask him to explain what they all meant: and as Cousin John was very

fond of children generally, and particularly so of little Willy, he would good-naturedly take his pencil and sketch him as many little drawings as he pleased. So he answered, "Well then, Willy, my little man, come and sit on this chair by my side, and I will see what I can do." Then he sketched and sketched away, till he had finished two nice drawings.

"Oh what pretty pictures," cried Willy, "what can they be about?"

"The first," said Cousin John, "is, as you see, the picture of a handsome black charger, with an officer mounted on his back; the name of the horse was Hero, and the rider is intended for my father, and your uncle, Willy. My father, as you know, held a commission in the

army during the late war; and in all the battles in which he was engaged he always rode 'Black Hero,' because he was a horse he could always depend upon, being possessed of great strength and speed. Then he was beautifully shaped, with a fine arching neck and rich flowing mane; but, what was better than all his beauty, was, that he might always be trusted in hour of need: neither the deep roar of the artillery nor the sharp rattle of the musketry raised any feeling of fear in him: he would rush to the very cannon's mouth as bravely as if he had been taking an ordinary canter in the fields.

"In the course of an engagement which took place between our forces and

the French, the regiment to which my father belonged was ordered to charge some of the enemy's cavalry, who were posted on an opposite hill. In the encounter my father was wounded in the arm by a musket-ball; and, being unable to control his horse or keep up with his companions, he was captured by a French soldier, who, seeing his helpless condition, contented himself with disarming him and leading him to the rear of the French regiment. The contest was kept up with fearful energy, and the enemy were at first driven back by the resolute courage of our troops; but as reinforcement after reinforcement continued to arrive to the assistance of the French, they in turn became victors; and the

English commander, seeing the inutility and folly of contending against such superior numbers, ordered the retreat to be sounded, which in cavalry regiments, is done by the trumpet sound.

“My father’s horse, hearing the notes he had always been accustomed to obey, burst suddenly from the soldier who was holding him, galloped at full speed through the very centre of the French regiment, and carried his master safely to the side of his old comrades.

“You may be sure that after this my father was always very fond of Black Hero, for he had probably saved his life, or, at all events, had rescued him from a long and dreary imprisonment.

“At the conclusion of the war my





BLACK HERO. Page 91.

father returned to England, and brought with him the noble animal, the companion of his toils. I was a little boy then, Willy, but I recollect well the day when they rode up to our own door, and mama, in her joy, actually threw her arms around Hero's neck. And he grew such a favourite with us all, for he was so gentle and docile, he would let me and my little brothers and sisters mount him, and then he would walk about as quietly as a lamb."

"Oh what a good brave horse," said Willy; "how I should have loved him. But what does the other picture mean? Is that about Hero, too?"

"That," said his cousin, "refers to another part of his history.—My father

soon after his return home received a letter from a very old friend of his, a Mr. Manby, who was very anxious to see him, but who was prevented by his infirmities from travelling so far as our house. So Hero was saddled and brought round to the door, and my father started off on his expedition. His friend was delighted to see him, and they remained so long chatting and talking over old times, that when my father rose to depart, the evening had already set in. It was then the latter end of September, and the sky, which had been serene and beautiful during the day, had now become dark and overclouded. Already distant flashes of lightning were to be seen, and a few large drops of rain which fell proclaimed

that a heavy storm was at hand. Mr. Manby tried to persuade my father to remain under the shelter of his roof for the night; but knowing the anxiety mama would be in during his absence, he determined at once to hasten homewards. Mr. Manby then offered to despatch a messenger to our house to inform us of his intention of not returning till the next day; but my father would not for an instant hear of another being exposed for his sake to danger from which he would himself shrink. 'And besides,' said he, 'Hero and I have faced so many dangers already, that, trusting in Providence, we need not fear to encounter even so stormy a night as this.' So, drawing his coat about him, and bending

his head before the wind and rain, off he dashed on his homeward way.

“Soon the rain descended in torrents, and the night grew darker and darker, save that every now and then a bright flash of lightning would illumine the road with a noonday light. But still my father urged on his steed, and the noble animal, regardless of the pelting of the sharp hailstones in his face, or the deep and appalling roar of the thunder overhead, kept bravely on his way. The road now lay across a bleak common without tree or shelter of any kind, and here the full fury of the storm burst upon them. My father knew the road well, for it was one he had often travelled as a boy, and he had not for an instant doubted of easily

finding his way home; but, deceived by the darkness and the storm, he at length found himself in a part of the heath entirely unknown to him. Utterly at a loss which way to turn, he had only the usual chance of benighted travellers,—loosing the rein, and leaving it to chance and his horse's instinct to extricate him from his difficulty. Left to himself, Hero sped swiftly across the heath; but soon a new and unexpected impediment presented itself. As my father rode on, he heard the rushing of water, and, on a nearer approach, had some difficulty in recognising the broad and rapid stream, swollen by the sudden deluge, which lay before him, as what had in the morning been but a small rivulet. What was to be done? My father had

been too much in the habit of overcoming difficulties and dangers, by boldly facing them, to be daunted by his present dilemma; and after a moment's pause, he chose what seemed the most suitable spot for the attempt, and pressed his horse to the stream. For the first time in his life Hero refused to obey. When brought to the edge of the water he snorted fearfully, tossed his head, and could not be persuaded to attempt the passage. At length, on being again and again urged, he suddenly took the bit in his teeth, galloped some distance up the bank of the stream, and finally plunged in at a spot where the water seemed chafing and rushing with more force and rapidity than anywhere around. Well accustomed to the manage-

ment of his horse, my father kept his broad chest to the stream ; for it required all the skill and resolution of both horse and rider to enable them to reach the opposite bank.

“Mama and all of us children were sitting up listening to the raging of the storm ; for although we hoped that my father would have staid the night with his friend, still we were in too great a state of anxiety and uncertainty to think of sleep. It was now past twelve o'clock, and mama was just insisting upon our retiring to rest,—though by the anxious look of her pale face, I could see she had no such intention herself,—when the sounds of a horse's hoofs were heard in the avenue, and the next instant my father galloped

up to the door, drenched to the skin, and covered with his horse's foam.

"After our first joy at seeing him safe had somewhat subsided, we did not forget to pat and praise Black Hero for the part he had taken in the night's exertion. It afterwards appeared, from the marks of the horse's hoofs on the spot, that my father must, in the darkness, have mistaken the usual ford; for, had he succeeded in forcing the horse into that part of the stream which he first attempted, he would probably have perished, as the very stillness of the water was there only occasioned by its greater depth. ✕

"I must tell you one more of Hero's feats, and then I shall have done. He performed it when he was growing old;

twelve months only before he died. It was his last grand deed, but it was his best and his bravest.

“We were living, at the time the incident I am about to relate to you occurred, on the coast of ——shire. Our house was beautifully situated. Behind it rich majestic woods extended further than the eye could reach; while before it lay a smooth verdant plain, gradually sloping to the sea. You might have wandered for hours in that secluded spot without meeting a single human being. The sea presented nearly the same appearance, for we seldom caught more than a distant view of some far-off vessel, visible but for a moment above the horizon, and in the next lost to the eye, as it pursued its course of business or pleasure.

“ We had been out one afternoon roaming amongst the woods, plucking the wild flowers, playing at hide-and-seek among the trees, running and jumping about, laughing till we made the place ring again with our merriment, when we heard mama’s voice calling to us to return home. We begged of her to allow us to stay out a little longer, as we were enjoying ourselves so much. ‘ And besides, mama,’ we urged, ‘ it will not be dark yet for another hour.’

‘ But, my dear children,’ said mama, ‘ you must come in an hour earlier this evening, for, from the appearance of the sky, we are fearful that a heavy storm is at hand.’

“ So bats, balls, and hoops were collected

together, and in we went; and I can assure you we were not sorry we had taken mama's advice, for in half an hour it began pouring with rain, and we should certainly have got wet through, had we not gone in when we did.

“In the evening we were all sitting round the table, listening eagerly to my father, who was relating some adventure which he had met with abroad; when suddenly a bright gleam of light shone before the window, and, the next instant, was followed by a loud report. All of us children fancied it must have been a flash of lightning. But my father shook his head. ‘No,’ said he, ‘it was the report of a gun; it came from the sea: it must have been from some vessel in distress; and

from the sound she must be close on our coast.'

"Even as he spoke a report louder, and apparently nearer still than the former one, burst on our ears. My father summoned his servants around him, caused bonfires to be lit to show the position of the coast to those on the ship, and hastened to the beach, to see what further assistance could be rendered.

"The storm had now somewhat subsided, and by the fitful light of the moon he discovered a vessel, the masts hanging over her sides, a complete wreck, driven entirely at the mercy of the winds and waves, which were fast drifting her on the rocky coast. Every instant brought her nearer and nearer, till at length the people on deck

could be distinctly seen, in every attitude of despair, rushing frantically about, and expecting every moment to be overwhelmed in the raging waves. When within only a short distance of the shore, the ship struck violently, and became firmly fixed between a cleft of the rock. No longer borne up by the buoyancy of the water, the waves swept uncontrolled over her, threatening to sweep every living soul from the devoted vessel. The shrieks of the wretched crew and passengers, men, women, and children, were perfectly heart-rending; for though so near shore, no assistance could be rendered to them, as no boat was to be found within miles of the spot.—‘Yet something must be done,’ cried my father; ‘we cannot see our fellow-

creatures perish thus, without an attempt to save them.'—'Adam,' he said to an old servant, who had formerly been a soldier in his regiment, 'saddle Hero instantly. I will gallop over to the next village to seek assistance of some kind.'

"Adam soon saddled and led forth Hero, who neighed and tossed his noble head, as if he knew that a fitting moment had arrived to call forth his prowess. My father mounted, and was on the point of starting off; but on looking again at the vessel, he checked himself. 'It would be useless,' he said: 'before I could reach the village and return with assistance, the rising tide will have buried every vestige of the wreck. There is but one chance; Hero is still strong,

and I doubt not could swim with me to the vessel !

“ ‘ Oh, my dear, dear master !’ cried old Adam, ‘ tempt not so the fearful waves ; many a noble form will they roll over this night. Oh ! add not your own to the number. If yonder stout vessel could not withstand their fury, how can you expect to brave them ?’

“ ‘ We must trust in Providence, Adam,’ said my father ; ‘ He has power to save and to destroy ; to confound the mighty, and to bid the weak be strong.’

“ ‘ Then, dear Sir,’ said Adam, ‘ if some one must go, let it be me. I am an old man. I have neither wife nor child to mourn for me ; and with the waves that roll over him, old Adam will be forgotten.’

“ ‘Nay, nay; think not so seriously of it, Adam,’ replied my father. ‘I have an inward conviction that I *can* succeed in saving the lives of these poor people; and so feeling, I should be criminal were I not to attempt it;’ and he pressed forward as he spoke nearer to the breakers.

“ ‘Oh, stay, master, dear master!’ urged Adam, wringing his hands—but in vain.

“ My father urged Hero to the sea: the animal gave one noble bound, and plunged amid the breakers. For an instant man and horse were buried beneath the foaming surf—in the next, they emerged, and old Adam gazed after them with straining eyes, as from time to time they were hidden in the hollows of

the waves, or were seen hurried along upon their giant crests.

“As my father drew near the wreck he was seen by the persons on deck, who at first imagined it was a boat put out to their rescue. The keen eye of the sailors, however, soon detected the reality, and one of their number sprang instantly to the vessel's side with a rope, coiled round his arm, which he prepared to cast to their deliverer so soon as he could approach sufficiently near for the purpose. Nearer and nearer still the bold voyagers approached the vessel: the sailor's practised hand sends the rope flying through the air, uncoiling as it flies. It falls within my father's reach—he grasps it, and turning his horse's head towards

the shore, he bears with him that frail cord on which depends the existence of the luckless crew. Yet a few minutes, and the gallant steed and his bold rider will be safe. But can they succeed in forcing their way through the foaming breakers, widely as they burst on the beach? Can they succeed in landing, despite the backward current of the retreating waves? They are nearly safe now; but ah, the noble steed's strength is well-nigh spent! He struggles, struggles hard, but in vain: the tide prevails—One moment more, and they will again be swept to sea! But no; old Adam rushes in. Bravely, bravely done, old man!—He seizes the reins—one effort more—they are safe, they are safe!

“But were the people saved?” said Willy; “the women and all the poor little children?”

“They were, Willy. By means of the rope there was no great difficulty in drawing them safely ashore. Not quite so pleasantly, perhaps, as if they had landed in a boat; though I did not hear any of them complain of the mode adopted for their preservation, for they were thankful that God had, in his mercy, suffered my father to be the means of rescuing them from otherwise certain destruction.

“After a time Hero began to feel the influence of years, and of the different hardships he had gone through. So we had him turned loose in a rich paddock, where he might roam about at his ease

We had a stable built for him to go into when he pleased, so that he might not be exposed to the inclemency of the weather; and there he passed the remainder of his days in peace and quietness; for my father would not allow him to be ridden or used again in any way. He became quite celebrated in our neighbourhood, and when any visitors came they always asked permission to see the famous horse. Hero would walk gently about, as if he were not aware of their presence; he grew daily more and more feeble, and the only time at which he would show something of his former fire was when he heard his old master's voice. *Then* he would arch his neck, give a loud clear neigh, and come galloping up in such

style, that you would hardly fancy him to be the same quiet feeble horse he seemed but the moment before.

“One morning we missed him at his accustomed spot in the paddock; he had not left his stable. We found him there, stretched on his side; his eyes closed, and lying so motionless, that, but for his faint breathing, we should have fancied him already dead.

“We patted him and spoke to him; but he stirred not, till at length we went mournfully to call my father.

“‘What, Hero! my poor Hero!’ said he: ‘Old companion of my toils; must we then part at last? Many friends have I known, but none who proved truer to me than thou!’

“The old steed heard his beloved master's voice ; for an instant his eyes opened ; he pricked his ears, and he gave one of his loud shrill neighs—it was but for an instant ; in the next he had fallen back in a struggle to start to his feet.

“Soldiers seldom weep ; but I saw the generous tears coursing down my father's manly cheeks, as he turned from the last look at his faithful companion through many a toilsome day.

“In the same field in which the poor horse died, beneath the shade of a wide-spreading oak-tree, we dug his grave. With the softest turf we raised a mound o'er Hero's head. With the sweetest flowers we decorated Hero's tomb.

COUSIN JOHN'S SECOND STORY.

FLUSH AND ROVER.

THE next time Willy saw his cousin, he begged him to give him the pictures that he had drawn of the good horse, Hero, as the tale had made a great impression on him, and he wanted to show the drawings to his little sisters, and to tell them all about them.

“Have you drawn any other pictures, cousin John,” he said, “since I saw you last? If you have, pray show them to me. I should so like to hear the his-

tory of any other favourites you may have had."

"No. Willy," said his cousin, "I have not drawn anything lately; but come with me to the library, and I will show you a little painting by a far better artist than I am, which I think will amuse you."

"Oh, what two dear little dogs!" cried Willy; "I do so love dogs; and there are their names, too, written underneath; 'Flush and Rover.' I know which would be my favourite."

"Which do you fancy most, then?" inquired his cousin.

"Oh! Rover, he looks such a nice handsome little fellow; I am sure he must be the best dog."

"Well, Willy," said his cousin, "you

shall hear their history, and then you can judge for yourself.

“Flush and Rover were two little spaniel puppies, the only remaining members of a large family; their brothers and sisters having been consigned soon after their birth, to a watery grave; poor Flush had only been saved from a similar fate at the earnest entreaty of his master's daughter; and Rover, on account of his promising appearance, his fine black and white spots and glossy silken ears, giving every prospect of his becoming a very handsome dog.

“The two puppies began very early to display a vast difference in their dispositions. Rover was never easy unless he were scrambling out of his warm bed,

and then no sooner had he got on to the cold flag-stones with which the yard was paved, than he would begin the most piteous whining, till he was again placed in his comfortable house. When there, he would always be disturbing the sweet temper of his brother by rolling and jumping over him when he felt inclined for a nap, and so upsetting the harmony of the family, that his mother was often obliged to give him a good shaking before he could be brought to a proper sense of duty and propriety. Flush, on the contrary, was of an extremely sweet and easy disposition ; he was not, perhaps, quite so handsome nor so lively as his brother, and though at a proper time he would join in his gambols and be as frisky and

playful as possible, yet, in general, he was so good and staid, that his mother felt no uneasiness in leaving him when her duties called her for a time from home.

“When the two puppies grew old enough, their mother was separated from them, and they only saw her now and then, as their master, who was fond of shooting, used to take her out to assist in finding the game; but she was always glad to see them on her return, and even after a hard day's hunting about the fields, would be quite ready for a game at play with Flush and Rover. Flush would jump and frisk about her, crouch himself slyly close to the ground, then run up to her and put his little paws

round her neck; and the party would be as cheerful and happy as possible till Rover, not content with their innocent amusements, would mischievously seize the tip of his good mother's tail between his sharp teeth, causing her to give a yelp of pain, and so irritating her, that she would bestow on him a well-merited chastisement, and send him whining dismally to bed. In this manner did Rover frequently break up the pleasure of the evening.

“ Their master now thinking them sufficiently advanced in strength and sagacity, took them out with him to assist him in his sport. Rover was quite proud and delighted at the opportunity of displaying his superior beauty before the other

dogs in the field; and was pertly running in advance of the others, flourishing his tail and looking as conceited as you please, when a sharp cut from his master's whip made him drop it quickly between his legs, and slink behind their heels. When they reached the fields, Rover got still further into disgrace. The duty the dogs had to perform, was to keep within a moderate distance of their master, and hunt up any game they might find, for him to shoot. Flush, keeping near his mother, and watching her movements, managed very well for a beginner; and Rover's giddiness was for a time kept in check by the remembrance of the whip, and by the voice of his master, when he saw he was inclined to

roam far away. Their master was pleased with their conduct, and all was going on tolerably well, although as yet they had found no game, when, in an unfortunate moment, Rover espied two dogs at play in an adjoining field, and, deaf to his master's cry of 'Back, Rover!' and the angry crack of his whip, thinking only in his vanity of surprising the two strangers by the beauty of his glossy coat, off started the thoughtless Rover. Scarcely had he gone half-way across the field, when, whir-r-r, whir-r-r, with out-spread wings, up started two glistening pheasants, the first they had yet seen. Rover had in his haste nearly run over them, and, frightened by the unexpected sight, and the noise they made in rising, back

went the startled and disobedient puppy ; but something worse than fright was in store for him ; his master, angry that his vanity had been the cause of his losing so good an opportunity of filling his game-bags, took out his whip, and began to administer so sound a beating, that the hapless Rover yelped and howled, and rolled over and over on his back. But the whip this time was applied unsparingly, till Flush, creeping up to his master, and looking wistfully and imploringly in his face, seemed to beg of him not to beat poor Rover any more. As to Rover himself, he now turned quite sulky at the treatment he had received, and doggedly refused to hunt any more ; dropping his long ears and

tail, and looking quite glum and ill-tempered. At last when, on persisting in declining his share of the labour, his master again showed him the whip, he looked at him doubtfully for a moment, and then fairly took to his heels. Reaching home, sore and sulky, he sneaked into his kennel, and would not come out again that day.

“His master tried him again and again, but always found him so perverse and disobedient, that at last he gave up all hope of Rover being useful to him in the field, and left him at home as a pet dog for the children.

“Rover was now vain beyond all bounds; he was washed and combed, pampered and fed with all kind of dainties, and.

having nothing to do all the day long, would hardly have been recognised as the companions of the other dogs.

“He felt his own importance, and, puffed up with conceit, would not condescend any longer to notice his relations. They, however, were quite as comfortable as he, if not more so ; for idleness and luxury do not always bring happiness. True, they worked hard all day ; but when they came home in the evening, the exercise they had taken only made them enjoy their plain food the more ; whereas Rover, with all kinds of dainties before him, hardly ever knew what it was to enjoy a hearty meal. At first he took great delight in the pats and caresses that were bestowed on him in the drawing

room ; but overfeeding and indulgence did not tend to improve his temper, and he soon began to consider it a trouble to be roused from his sleep, to show himself off to any friends of his young mistress who happened to call. With all his laziness, he still retained his mischievous propensities ; and though so well fed, yet nothing pleased him more than to watch for an opportunity when the cook's back was turned, of stealing something nice from the dresser ; and when successful in this trick, he would waddle off with the dainty as quickly as he could, and if unable to eat it all himself, hide it under his bed, rather than let the other dogs have a bit.

“ One day when he was out for a walk,

he saw a labouring man asleep on a sunny bank. Rover went sniffing about, and soon discovered, lying by his side, a parcel tied up in a handkerchief. He dragged it a little distance off, and with some difficulty succeeded in extracting its contents; but what was his disappointment at finding it was merely only bread and cheese, which the poor man had brought from home for his dinner. Rover had much too fine and delicate an appetite to think for an instant of eating such plain fare; but, actuated by the spirit of mischief, he began scratching a hole in which to bury his treasure. So intent was he on this work, that he did not perceive the owner of the dinner wake up, and stretch out his hand to the

place where he had left his provision. Not finding it there, the man arose and looked about him, and seeing how Rover was occupied, had no difficulty in tracing the thief. Moving cautiously up to the unfortunate dog, almost before he was aware of his approach, he had seized him by the neck. Rover bit, and snapped, but all in vain; his capturer held him fast. 'You little wretch,' said he, 'I'll teach you to steal my dinner again!' and, after cuffing him soundly, he tossed him into the middle of a large muddy pond.

"Spaniels can generally swim very well; but Rover was so unaccustomed to exertion, that he had the greatest difficulty in reaching the other side.

“ Covered with black mud, and overcome with fear, pain, and fatigue, he at length managed to reach home. ‘ Oh my poor Rover,’ said his kind mistress, ‘ where have you been ?’ Rover, however, was too tired and too much ashamed of his appearance to wish to be taken notice of. He crept off to bed, and strove to forget his pain and mortification in sleep.

“ The next morning, a good washing restored his silky coat to its former whiteness ; but the servant, in order to save so much additional trouble, (for whenever Rover went out he was sure to get into some scrape) resolved, in future, to prevent him leaving the house.

“ Not allowed to take his usual exer-

cise, though that was moderate enough, he grew fatter and more ill-tempered every day ; everybody in the house quite disliked him, his little mistress alone excepted. By her he was still caressed and fondled, until on one unfortunate day when, as she was kindly stroking his head, he actually snapped at the hand of his benefactress.

“ Her papa declared he would not keep so surly an animal another day in the house, and Rover's fate was on the point of being sealed when he was saved by the kind intercession of his mistress. At her request it was agreed he should be spared, if any one could be found who would take him with his present character.

“A neighbouring farmer was at last induced to take him into his possession, who said his bad temper would not so much signify to him, as he wanted a sharp little dog that would run about his yard, and bark and give notice whenever strangers intruded on the premises.

“The fare at the farmhouse was very different to what Rover had been accustomed to, and he no longer ran any chance of being spoiled by over-feeding. On the contrary, misery awaited him from the other extreme. His new master had a large family of his own to provide for, and what scraps they left—and they were not very abundant—had to be shared by the great yard dog. Rover had to look very sharp, or his hungry fellow-

watchman would eat it all up before he could get a mouthful. His rage and hunger once so far overcame his prudence, that he even ventured to attack his large companion, when he was as usual eating a most undue proportion of their dinner. He received, however, so much the worst of it in the encounter that ensued, that he never had the temerity to assert his rights in that quarter a second time.

“Driven to his own resources, he was obliged to prowl about the village in search of prey, and soon regaining his former activity, became the most troublesome and expert thief in the place. His favourite practice was to watch round the corner of the street in which the butcher's shop was situated; and, let it

he left one moment unguarded, a mutton chop, steak, or cutlet, was sure to vanish. So daring a marauder did he grow, that no goodwife in the village could venture to leave her cottage door open for an instant, with any cooking before the fire; knowing, from experience, that Rover would, without ceremony, invite himself to a share in the repast.

“The farmer had so many complaints made to him of depredations of his dog, that he would willingly have got rid of his bargain; the animal's mischievous tricks were, however, so well known, that he could not obtain another home for him in the neighbourhood.

“While Rover's ill conduct was daily binging him into greater disgrace, Flush

continued happy and comfortable in his old home, and gradually fell into the place his silly brother had forfeited. He soon became a greater favourite with the family than poor unfortunate Rover had ever been; for kind treatment, instead of making him cross and snappish, seemed only to increase his natural docility and sagacity. The shooting season was over, and there was no further occupation for him in the field; but he generally accompanied his master's family in their walks; and a most amusing companion the children found him. He was very proud to make himself useful, and would never let them walk in peace till they had given him something to carry; leaping and bounding in their path until he had ob-

tained possession of a stick, a little basket or parasol. Perfectly satisfied when he was thus laden, he would drop his ears, and trot along by their side, looking gravely sensible of the responsibility of his charge. No fear of Flush losing anything confided to him! If the boys challenged each other to a race, and he did not choose to be behindhand in sharing the sport, he would bring the stick that he was carrying, lay it at his master's feet, and look wistfully and beseechingly at him till he resumed it; but not till then would Flush bound away to take his part in the race.

"His master sometimes purposely dropped his stick, and, calling away the dog, would walk on, leaving it in the

road ; and, no matter what the distance, he had only to make a sign to Flush, when off he would bound, and never failed to return with the cane, which he would lay quietly down at his master's feet, and then look knowingly up at him, as if asking for something else to do. The sagacious little dog once performed a more important service :—

“ His master had occasion to walk to a neighbouring town on business, and took with him a pocket-book containing papers of great value. On his return home he found, to his dismay, that the book was missing. He remembered well that he had had it safe just before he started on his return, and fancying that he might by chance have dropped it on the road,

he retraced his steps, looking carefully right and left, in the hope of recovering the lost papers. Flush, who had run out, jumping and frisking up, as he always did, to welcome him home, now accompanied him, and seemed aware that something was amiss. He ran on before his master, snuffing about till he came to a stile about a mile distant from home. Here he paused, and by the quick motion of his bushy little tail, his master was in hopes that he had discovered the lost pocket-book. But no: Flush kept hunting round and round the same spot for some time, and at last much to his master's disappointment, turned into a path branching off in a contrary direction to the one he had traversed in the morning.

“‘No no, Flush,’ he cried; ‘here! here!’

“But Flush continued to run gaily on with his nose close to the ground, till he found his master was not following him. Then he looked back, and seemed to beg of him to proceed; but finding he did not do so, began jumping and barking; running on a little distance, and then turning round and wagging his tail again. His master, at length, struck by his conduct, resolved to see where he would lead him.

“Flush now trotted nimbly along the path for about a quarter of a mile further, till he came to a small cottage, where a man was standing at the door with something in his hand which he

seemed to be examining. Flush began jumping and barking around him, and his master, on his approach, was overjoyed at discovering that the poor man held in his hand the lost pocket-book. He had picked it up but a few minutes before Flush and his master returned to the spot where it had been lost.

“I have not time to relate any more anecdotes about Flush and Rover this morning, Willy; but tell me, have you changed your opinion of your favourite dog?”

Willy laughed, and said, he “now liked Flush a thousand times better than Rover.”

THE REVENGEFUL INDIAN.

“GOOD morning, uncle Charles,” cried James and Frank Thornton.—“Good morning, my dear boys,” said uncle Charles in return. “Which of you have I to thank for cutting open the leaves of Alison’s History, which I found ready for my perusal this morning?”

“Oh, that was Frank’s doing,” said James: “Frank is always so good and thoughtful.”

“But you have been thoughtful and industrious too this morning, James,”

said his brother; "see, uncle Charles, he has fed your birds, and watered your flowers, and then he has placed your easy chair and footstool for you, all quite snug and comfortable."

"Oh yes, uncle, I did indeed," said James, "because I thought you would be tired this morning, as you were out so late last night."

"Well, you have both been very good boys," said their uncle, patting them kindly on the head; "but, master James, how comes it that you know I was out so late last night, eh? Those twinkling little eyes of yours look too bright this morning to have been open till the hour at which I returned home."

"Why, uncle Charles," said James,

“we wanted to keep ourselves awake till you came home last night; so when we were in bed we began telling one another all the tales we could think of, and that kept us awake for some time; and after that we agreed to speak to one another every two or three minutes, just to prevent ourselves falling asleep; but, somehow or other, we forgot to do so, and we dropped off before we were aware of it, till we recollect hearing the clock strike eleven, so, as you had not come home then, we fancied you would be late. But had you a pleasant party, uncle? and was that funny old Indian gentleman there? and did he tell any of his dreadful stories?”—

“Gently, gently, you little chatterbox,”

cried uncle Charles; "one question at a time, if you please. We passed a very pleasant evening certainly; the funny old Indian gentleman, as you call him, formed one of the party, and he related a great number of anecdotes."

"But were they dreadful stories?" said James, "Do you know, uncle, I am very fond of dreadful stories."

"Oh, how can you say so James!" said his brother; "you know I caught you the other day with the tears in your eyes, whilst you were reading the account of a poor family who had been buried in the snow."

"Ah! I know I could not help crying a little when I read that story," said James, "because it seemed so very sad for the poor people to be ruined as they

were, after they had been good and industrious for so many years before. Did it not, uncle? But I do not think I quite meant to say dreadful stories; I think I meant to say, I like interesting stories, about people who have escaped from prison, or from wild beasts, or any kind of danger; yes, I think I like interesting stories, uncle."

"I have no doubt you do," said uncle Charles, smiling, "and I rather think I can recollect such a tale for you, and one related too by your friend, the Indian gentleman. The worst of it is, that I did not hear the commencement of the tale, so I do not know whether it happened to a friend of Major Philips, or whether he had heard or read of it. However, I

suppose these facts will not be of much importance to you, as the tale is, I think, interesting, and had well nigh proved dreadful. So, boys, take your seats, and I will begin at once:—

“In the summer of the year 18—, the Indian villages, north of the Ganges, were kept in a continual state of anxiety, in consequence of the quantity of wild animals which infested their neighbourhood. The season was one of unusual drought, and the wild beasts, unable to obtain a supply of water in their usual haunts, descended in whole herds to the plains. A British detachment was stationed on the outskirts of one of these villages, and day after day, distressing and appalling accounts were brought in of the ravages

which were nightly exercised on the flocks and herds of the poor Indians. As yet, fortunately, no human being had fallen into their clutches; but still, after nightfall, the roars and savage cries of the various animals grew sufficiently alarming, to prevent any one from venturing abroad. A grand hunt was therefore proposed by the officers of the English regiment, at which several of the most influential of the Indians in the neighbouring villages, consented to assist.

“Colonel N., who commanded the British detachment, was appointed leader of the party, as he was well skilled in the Indian hunting-field. Elephants were collected from all quarters, and they, with the mounted horsemen, formed the main

body of attack ; a large party of Indians accompanied them as guides and beaters ; and another party was sent in advance with tents and provisions, as the hunt was arranged to last for two days.

“The greatest success attended them in their expedition. In addition to destroying a great number of beasts of prey, they secured enough game to support the surrounding villages for some days. The game, it was agreed to distribute equally between the English party and the Indians ; and toward the evening the tents were pitched, and the distribution of spoil commenced. All was proceeding amicably, till unfortunately the honour of having slain the largest and most ferocious of the wild beasts, was mutually

claimed by one of the English soldiers and an Indian chief. Neither would yield the point; high words ensued, the Indian laid his hand on his knife, and the English soldier struck him. The dark eyes of the Indian flashed with rage, as with his bare knife in his hand he sprang on his unarmed antagonist; and, had not Colonel N. rushed in and struck his arm in the air, he would most probably have slain the soldier on the spot.

“The rest of the party now interfered, and endeavoured to restore the harmony of the meeting. But a gloom settled on the Indian chief's brow. When the hunting meal was cooked, he touched no portion of it, but preserved a sullen silence. The English officers strove again

and again to produce a reconciliation, but without effect.

“‘No,’ he said, ‘the insult put upon him by the soldier he could have overlooked,—he was a low man, mere dirt,—but to have his avenging arm struck from its destined vengeance by the great English chief—he would not forgive it!’—After a time, however, he seemed to relax a little; acknowledged that his people could not shoot like ours; and we were superior in every respect; and even consented to receive the apology of the soldier who had struck him.

“The English were glad to have thus arranged an affair which they at first thought might have met with a serious termination, and proceeded to fix the

tents for the night. Colonel N. retiring from the rest of the party, threw himself on a quiet bank to refresh himself after the toil of the day. The still evening air, the quiet hum of the insects, and his previous exertions all tended to produce a desire for sleep, and he was almost unconsciously falling into a dose, when he was startled by a rustling in the bush immediately behind him. The idea instantly occurred to him, that the Indians, knowing him to be alone, had followed him, and were about to avenge upon him the insult he had offered their chief. He sprang to his feet, seized his gun, and cocked it as he rose. But all was now quiet, nothing was to be seen, not a leaf seemed to stir; and the Colonel was

about to turn away, thinking that he must have been deceived by his half waking fancies, when he saw a pair of piercing eyes gazing fiercely on him. A second glance proved them to belong to one of the most deadly snakes of India. The creature was just uncoiling itself from a sapling, and preparing to spring upon its prey. The Colonel was a brave man; he had faced dangers in the battle field; and, in the hunting parties, he was always the first and the bravest. But, as he looked on his deadly foe, the big drop stood out on his brow, and his knees trembled beneath him. Another moment, and the reptile would spring upon him; and he well knew that but one bite of its venomous fangs would be certain death.

With an effort, he recovered himself, brought his gun to his shoulder, and fired. The snake writhed convulsively on the ground; but the Colonel, knowing the tenacity of life possessed by these reptiles, ventured not near it, but hastened to procure the assistance of his companions, who, with the Indians, soon destroyed it.

“The Colonel was complimented for the presence of mind he had displayed, and the service he had rendered the community by destroying so dangerous a serpent.

“‘The English Chief is great; he is brave,’ said the old Indian: ‘He is as the simoom of the desert; what can resist him? My brother has concealed the insult he offered me—he shall be honoured as he deserves. Let the snake be hung

before the entrance of his tent, as a proof of his skill. I myself will place it there with my own hands.'

"The English party were well pleased with the idea; and were gratified to think that the Indian had so soon forgiven the insult he considered himself to have received.

"But they little dreamed of the savage intentions entertained by the wily Indian. He had seen at a glance that the dead snake was a female, and his experience told him that its male companion was not far off, and would on missing its mate, no doubt endeavour to trace her out, With well assumed kindness, therefore, he urged the party to return to the tents, whilst he seized the snake and followed

them: taking care, as he did so, to trail the mangled reptile along the grass, thereby making it easy for her companion to discover her track.

“As the hunt was to be renewed the following day, the English party retired early to rest. One by one the different hunters repaired to their beds, and, amongst the rest, Colonel N., with the dead snake, as a trophy of his skill, still hanging in his tent; and none were to be seen abroad but a few sleepy soldiers appointed as sentinels.

“The revengeful Indian, however, did not sleep; and, concealed behind a brake, he stood anxiously awaiting the completion of his abominable project. As he had calculated, so it fell out; the male

snake, on its return, had missed its companion, and traced her to the bounds of the encampment. Whilst the hunters were stirring, it had been prevented from approaching nearer; but now that all was quiet, the Indian hugged himself with savage glee, as he saw the deadly creature slowly crawling within the circle of the tents. Sometimes it would pause a moment, as if in doubt, and he felt fearful that it would change its course; but no: true to its purpose, it returned to the trail, and the Indian again rejoiced as he saw it drawing its undulating body nearer and nearer the Colonel's tent. When it arrived there, it raised its crest, and a low hissing sound issued from its distended jaws. Cautiously it moved round

and round, seeking for a spot at which to enter, till it came to the opening. There it seemed again to hesitate, and then gently forced its head beneath the folds of the tent. All was quiet; and, inch by inch, it drew after it the rest of its body.

“The eyes of the Indian gleamed with savage delight; he drew a long deep inspiration; for, as he had watched the movements of the serpent, scarcely had he dared to breathe, so fearful was he of disturbing its progress. But now his triumph was complete—his revenge was at hand. The Englishman, who had dared to insult him, was sleeping in all the calmness of imagined security; yet, let him make but the slightest movement, and the fangs of one of the most deadly

of Indian serpents would be instantly fixed upon him.

“Long and anxiously the Indian waited for the completion of his hopes, till at last, his patience becoming exhausted, he was rising from his hiding-place, and cautiously approaching the Colonel’s tent, when, suddenly, a sharp cry burst from within. The folds of the tent were violently agitated, and the voice of his victim rang on his ears. He waited not to hear more: with a loud exulting laugh of savage glee and triumph, he rushed from the encampment, and sprang into the jungle.

“Had he but waited a moment longer he would have found that his triumph was not quite so complete as he had ima-

gined. A large faithful dog, which always accompanied the Colonel, had, unknown to the Indian, taken up its place for the night at the foot of his master's bed. The noiseless approach of the snake had not disturbed the faithful creature, till it was within a few paces of the couch; then, as the serpent was in the very act of making its spring, the brave dog seized it by the throat.

Colonel N., roused from his sleep by the violent struggle that took place between the dog and his formidable foe, rushed from the tent, calling the sentinels to his assistance. They came quickly, with swords and muskets, and succeeded in destroying the serpent, though not without some difficulty, as the crea-

ture had wound itself so closely round the dog, that they could hardly kill it without injuring the latter. However, having at last effected its destruction, they turned their attention to the dog. The brave animal was well-nigh spent with the struggle, and the crushing folds of the snake; but, as he had seized his foe near the neck, as he had never relinquished his hold, and as there was no apparent wound to be found upon him, his master hoped that no serious effect would ensue. He carried him gently to his own bed and laid him there. The poor dog seemed grateful for his master's kindness; he licked his hand, and looked fondly up in his face; but he could not prevent a moan of pain from breaking

from him. He became more restless every minute; his eyes distended, and the foam rolled from his mouth. He remained thus for the space of half an hour; and, as the symptoms then became more and more apparent, Colonel N. was urged by his companions to shoot the poor animal, as it was evident that the serpent had inflicted some unseen wound. But he could not bring himself to destroy the brave dog that, but the moment before, had saved his life—that had so long been the companion of his daily walks—while there remained any chance of its recovery. But, as the venom inflicted by the snake coursed through its veins, the struggles and agony of the poor dog increased in violence; and death,

within one short hour, put a period to its sufferings.

At daybreak the next morning, the English party assembled to resume their sports; but, to their surprise, the Indians had all disappeared. It was afterwards known that they, in common with the offended Indian, were acquainted with his treacherous project; and, fearful of their participation in it being discovered, had silently departed to their homes in the dead of the night.

“ This, boys, as far as I can recollect, is the story I heard last night. I hope it has amused you. What say you, James, is it dreadful enough for your taste?”

“ Oh, thank you, uncle; thank you for the trouble you have taken to amuse us.

It was a very nice story indeed ; though I wish it had not ended quite so dreadfully as it did. I am so sorry to think that the good dog should have been killed,—and directly after his brave conduct, too. But you have not told us the name of the snakes.”

“They were of the kind called the Cobra di Capello, or hooded snake ; and are the most deadly of India’s serpents. Sometimes they are also called dancing snakes, from their being carried about for show by the natives who play some of their rough airs, of which the snakes are so enamoured, that, for the time they will forget their deadly propensities, and keep time to the music by the motions of their bodies. By the same means, the

Indian snake-charmers are said to be able to lure them from their lurking-places, when they wish to destroy them."

"And is there no cure for their bite, uncle?"

"No, not that I am aware of; in fact, so strong is the poison which accompanies their bite, that people seldom live more than an hour after its infliction. But, bless my heart," said Uncle Charles, drawing out his watch, "how quickly the morning has passed. Why, you little rogues, you have been taking up all my time, and I have half a dozen visits to make before dinner. But, boys, you will find a long account of the snake, in a work on Natural History, which lies on the library table. You cannot amuse

yourselves better than by searching it out, and reading it during my absence. Now, Edward, my hat: and my cane, James. Thank you, thank you, my dear boys. Good bye—good bye.”

EMILY MAYNARD.

EMILY MAYNARD was engaged in reading to her little cousins a new book of poems, which their papa had just given them. They were very pretty poems; full of truth, and yet simple, and suited to the age of children, such as you, my dear little readers. Some of them were lively; others were of a more serious character. There was one called "The Mother's Grave." It was a tale of a little girl whose mother had died early Emily read it aloud; and, as she read, her

voice faltered, and a tear stole down her cheek. Her young listeners cried ; partly from the story, and partly because they saw their cousin weep. Emily bent over them for an instant ; and, kissing them affectionately, dried their eyes. "It is a melancholy story," she said, "and brought back so forcibly, to my mind, the time when I was a little girl like you, my dear children, and when I also had a kind mama to love me, that I could not help weeping. It is a thought that always makes me sad ; and yet, though painful to dwell upon, I will relate to you the story of my early years ; for it may serve as a lesson to you, and save you from the regret which I have suffered."

"I was, at the time I refer to, rather

younger perhaps than yourselves. My father's pursuits called him much from home, and I was left entirely under the care of my mother; and oh, how kind a mother! It was impossible for any child to be otherwise than fond of her.

“ You may fancy, that, at my age, I could have had few, if any, opportunities of making, by any acts of mine, a fit return for all a mother's love. But what does a parent look for, in return for the many sleepless nights and watchings during infancy,—for the sacrifice of health—for the loss of all pleasure—for seeking no greater happiness than the welfare of her child? She asks but a small, a very small return—love and obedience.

“ But though I did love my mama, and

very tenderly too, yet I did not always do as she bid me. I had a very foolish, wicked way of arguing with her, when she told me to do anything, instead of at once trying cheerfully to execute her wishes. For instance, she would perhaps say, 'Go, Emily, and fetch me the little parcel which you will find in my room: it is on my dressing-table.' Then, I would answer, 'I shall have finished my doll's dress in a minute, mama, and then I will run and fetch your parcel.' 'Emily, my dear,' mama would reply, 'I want the parcel now: go at once.' And then, after various idle excuses, I at last did what I ought to have done at first.

"But I did not long have an opportunity of behaving in this naughty manner.

Poor mama was suddenly taken ill ; so ill, that the doctor would not even let me go into her room. And then, when I was left alone, I thought how often I had vexed her, and many little disobedient acts, which I thought nothing of at the time, rose up in my memory, now that my dear mama might be snatched away from me. I asked the nurse every minute in the day how mama was, and begged of her to let me go in, and wait upon her. But she told me I could not see mama : that perhaps she would be better shortly, and could then be able to see me again. So I sat down on the stairs, leading to mama's room, and sobbed bitterly, for I would have given anything to have waited upon dear mama, and to

have run on the messages which before I used to think so troublesome. I waited there till the doctor came, and prayed of him to let me go into the room, and I would be so good. He laid his hand gently on my head: 'Not to-day, my little girl,' he said; 'poor mama must not be disturbed: she is better than she has been, but is still very weak: to-morrow, perhaps, or the next day, I can let you see her, but you must promise me to be very quiet.' Oh, how thankful I was when the good doctor fulfilled his promise, and led me softly into mama's room. But, oh! poor mama! she looked so wan, and so pale, and smiled so feebly upon me, that I could not help sobbing aloud: I thought my heart would break.

‘Oh mama, mama,’ I cried; ‘why have they kept me from you so long? I will be very good if you will let me come and wait upon you. I will never again be so naughty and troublesome as I have been. Will you let me stay with you, dear mama? Oh say you will.’ Mama clasped me in her arms. ‘Bless thee! bless thee! my child,’ I heard her murmur; and I felt her hot tears fall on my neck.” Emily paused, for her heart was full, and her little cousins’ cheeks were suffused with tears. “And did your poor mama ever get better?” said they. “Alas! no,” said Emily; “she relapsed, and grew daily weaker and weaker; but while she lived, I was always with her; and it was some consolation to me to think that I

could be near her, and always at hand to attend to her wants. But now, my dear children, this has been a sad subject to us all; yet, let me hope that it will do some good. You have a kind papa and mama to love you. Let your conduct towards them be such, that you will, at any time be able to look back upon it without self-reproach; so that when the time shall come, that it may please your Heavenly Father to call those dear parents to another world, your grief at losing them may not be heightened by the remembrance of any act of disobedience or unkindness to them in this."

HENRY MORTON.

LITTLE HENRY MORTON was a very nice little boy; but he was not very fond of his book. He lived in a pretty house, surrounded by a pleasant garden filled with roses and pinks, and all kinds of sweet-smelling flowers. Henry had a piece of ground which he called his own garden; and, one day, when he had been a good boy, and had learned his lessons well, his mama told him he might go and amuse himself there.

Now nothing pleased Henry more than

working in his garden, which he longed to make as gay as possible. So he took some seeds which his kind aunt Mary had given him, and set about sowing them. But the ground was so hard that he found great trouble in making holes large enough for his purpose.

“Ah, Master Henry,” said Ralph, the gardener, who was passing by at the time, “your flowers will never grow well with the ground as hard as it now is. Before you sow seeds, you ought to dig it up well first, and, after that, rake it nice and smooth; then the roots will be able to spread, and your flowers will grow fine and large.”

“Will you dig up the ground for me, then?” said Henry, “for, I want



very much to plant my seeds this afternoon."

"Why, you must have patience," replied Ralph, "if I am to do it for you, for I have my cucumber frames and mushroom beds, and all my tender spring plants to cover up before the evening, or the frost might come and kill them all. And what would you do then, Master Henry, for salads and early vegetables, and all nice things of the kind?"

Henry was very vexed that he could not get his bed dug up that afternoon; and he walked away with the gardener's large spade over his shoulder, to see if he could not do it himself. But the spade was so heavy that he could scarcely carry it, and, instead of doing his garden any

good, he only knocked down the flowers he already had, and made himself very hot and very tired.

“Oh, mama,” he cried, as he saw Mrs. Morton approaching, “I cannot do anything with this nasty great spade. I wish you would make me a present of a little spade—one that I could use with ease: will you, dear mama?”

“I have no doubt you would find a little spade very useful,” said Mrs. Morton; “in fact, you can hardly expect to succeed in your gardening without one. But still, Henry, there is something else to be thought of first. There are many little boys who can read and write very prettily, at your age: now, if you will pay a little more attention to your books,

and will perfect yourself, in a month's time, in the lessons which I intend giving you, I will then ask papa to make you a present of the spade."

The next morning Henry sat down and began to learn his lessons very steadily ; for he longed to see his seeds in the ground, as Aunt Mary told him they would grow into fine plants, and bear very beautiful flowers. He kept on and on, day after day, till at last he made himself quite perfect in the lessons his mama had set him. And when he came in to breakfast one morning, he found a long brown paper parcel on the table ; and on it was written : ' Master Henry Morton.' His mama told him he might open it ; and there he found—oh ! such a nice

spade : and a rake and a hoe ! And Henry ran and kissed his papa and mama, and thanked them for their kind present ; and then he looked again at his treasures, and jumped about, and could scarcely contain himself for joy. After he had finished his lesson for the day, he bounded down to his garden, and worked away as busily as a bee. He dug up his ground, and hoed and raked it, and planted his seeds. And the Spring passed away ; the Summer came, and the flowers bloomed ; and Henry loved them all the more, because they seemed to smile upon him, and say — “ We are the reward of perseverance.”

AGNES AND HER PETS.

"O MAMA, MAMA! you never saw such funny little rogues in all your life! They do jump and frisk and play about so."

"Well, but my dear Agnes," said Mrs. Mildmay, "you have not yet told me what it is that has so amused you."

"O, mama! it is old Mrs. Pierson's kittens; do pray come and look at them. She has only one that she has not promised to give away, and she says I may have it if you will let me; it is such a love of a kitten; so I have just come to

ask your leave, and then I will run with my little basket and fetch it home. May I not, dear mama?"

"Gently, gently, Agnes," said Mrs. Mildmay; "a kitten is a very pretty, amusing little thing; but how do you think she would agree, as she grew up, with your other favourites? Remember, we must not forget old friends, Agnes; and I am afraid that your canary and goldfinch would stand a great chance of having their sweet notes stopped by the teeth and claws of Miss Pussy, unless great care be taken to keep them safely out of her reach."

"O, I shall be quite sure to take care of that," said Agnes; "and besides, mama, when we were in London last

year, do you know I saw a large cage, full of all sorts of animals? There were cats and rats, and rabbits, and dogs, and birds; and they all seemed as happy and comfortable together as possible. So, surely, my three pets ought to agree with one another."

"Well, my dear Agnes, said her mama, "I have no objection to your kitten; in fact, my reason for not keeping one before was only on account of your birds; but if you like to run the risk, go and fetch home your new friend. Only, remember I have warned you beforehand of the danger of leaving your birds within her reach."

Off started Agnes, and soon returned, bounding into the room with her pet

under her arm. Tibby, (for that was the name by which her little mistress chose to call the kitten,) mewed most mournfully at first, at her separation from her mother, and not all the efforts of Agnes could, for some time, induce her to join in a game at play. But she was so kindly treated, and so well fed, that she soon began to make herself very comfortable. She would run after a ball of thread which Agnes threw before her, seize it in her paws, and roll over and over with it, till Agnes was convulsed with laughter at her funny tricks. Still the old pets, the canary and goldfinch, were not forgotten; their cages were cleaned, and they were fed with as much care and attention as ever."

“I have been thinking,” said Agnes, one day, “what a good thing it would be, if I could make my three favourites agree well together, so that I might not be afraid of Tibby attacking the birds in my absence. Now, I have thought of a nice plan. I remember once, when I was a naughty girl, that mama would not let me have my breakfast till I had promised to behave myself better in future. Now, I will do just the same with you, Miss Tibby, I will not give *you* your breakfast quite so early this morning.” But it was soon found that hunger only increased Tibby’s inclinations for her natural prey. When an hour or two had passed beyond her usual feeding time, she began to prowl about in search

of something with which to satisfy her appetite; and when she saw the birds, her eyes glistened, and she crouched down and looked so fierce, that Agnes feared every moment, she would spring at them, in spite of her protecting presence. She hastened, therefore, to supply Tibby with her accustomed meal. Resolved not to repeat so dangerous an experiment a second time, but yet not altogether discouraged by her first failure, Agnes soon thought of another plan. She tried, by giving her as much as she could eat, to make the cat more amiable with her companions. This measure proved much more successful than the last; but though Tibby did not look quite as eagerly after the birds yet she still

cast such a longing eye upon them, that Agnes would have been afraid to leave them for a moment within her reach.

As Tibby grew up, she began to leave off many of her pretty playful ways. When Agnes threw her a ball to play with, she no longer ran frisking after it as formerly. She seemed to think that such gambols were all very well for a kitten, but not fit for a cat of her age and experience ; so she let the ball roll on, and would not condescend to take the slightest notice of it, but sat staring and winking thoughtfully at the fire, like a grave steady cat as she was, only now and then she would suffer her eyes to wander to the cages, as if thinking

what a nice little meal she could make from their contents.

Agnes was very careful not to let her have an opportunity by always hanging them out of her reach; and Tibby, for some time, looked and longed in vain. At last, on one unfortunate day, as Agnes was sitting poring over her lessons, she suddenly heard a carriage draw up to the door, and, looking up from her book, saw her cousin, Mary Lee, nodding and kissing her hand to her through the window.

Mary and Agnes were about the same age, and very fond of each other; but as the distance was great between their respective houses, they were not able to meet very often; and a great treat it was to both the little girls whenever Mr. Lee

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brought his daughter Mary to spend a day with Agnes. Forgetful now of everything else, in her joy at seeing her cousin, Agnes ran to welcome her, leaving Tibby apparently enjoying a comfortable doze on the hearth-rug. The temptation was too strong to be resisted; and the cat lost no time in springing at her victims. The birds fluttered wildly about the cage; dashing themselves into the very clutches of their fierce foe; and Agnes returned but in time to see the mangled remains of one unhappy songster strewn on the carpet, while Tibby, with the other in her mouth, stole swiftly from the room.

“Oh, my poor little birds,” cried Agnes bursting into tears, “would nothing satisfy

that cruel cat but taking your innocent lives? I shall never more hear your cheering songs: and to take you both too! O poor little goldfinch! you were so tame you would feed out of my hand—and my little canary, that would always chirp, and welcome me whenever I came into the room, and that had so many pretty ways!”

Poor Agnes, how sorry she was! Her cousin, Mary, did her best to console her, and good-naturedly said that, if her aunt would give her leave, she would give Agnes one of the two pretty birds she had at home, as she should be quite contented with one only. Agnes's mama, however, said she could not permit this, because Tibby would still be with them,

and she did not like to expose another bird to the fate that had befallen the poor canary and goldfinch.

Agnes had nothing to plead against this decree. She remembered her mama's warning, and heartily repented not having given greater heed to it. Tibby was now her only remaining pet, and she was no longer any source of amusement, since she had ceased to be a lively playful kitten; besides, Agnes thought she would, in future, always put her in mind of the cruel death inflicted on her sweet little songsters.

THE SISTERS.

"AH, Emma," cried Laura Thornton, as she opened the door of a room where her sister was diligently pursuing her morning studies, "here you are still busy with your books and exercises. I have been running about the garden till I grew tired of being alone, and I thought you would surely have prepared your lessons by this time; but I see by your business-looking face that you are not yet ready to come out with me."

“Indeed, sister,” replied Emma, smilingly, “I have got through the greater part of my lessons—my French exercises will occupy only another half-hour. But, dear Laura, when do you intend to set about your own?”

“I have not even thought about them yet, Emma,” replied Laura, a little impatiently, “and I wonder how you can pore over your books on this lovely May morning, when the garden looks so inviting. See, what a bright sun, and what a beautiful clear blue sky! I assure you the lawn is quite dry to-day—now do come out just for ten minutes, and have a game with me at battledore and shuttlecock.”

“As soon as I have finished my les-

sons, dear sister," still said Emma. "I enjoyed my walk before breakfast very much, but really I do not enjoy playing about the garden all the day long. Mama often tells us that a little work makes play ten times more pleasant, and I am sure I find it so. Do you not remember that, by the time I was ready to go out with you yesterday, you were quite tired, and said you did not know how it was that amusement always seemed to give me more pleasure than you, though I was less eager to join in it."

Finding her sister was not to be persuaded to quit her studies, Laura wisely determined, instead of interrupting them any longer, to commence her own, and with a rather disconsolate air drew a chair

to the opposite side of the table at which Emma was seated.

A very pleasant room was the little study which was always entered so reluctantly by Laura Thornton. Mrs. Thornton's residence was not above a mile or two distant from London, and the front of the house looked towards a dusty road on which coaches, carts and carriages of all kinds were continually passing. At the back, however, the prospect was different. There, there was a garden prettily laid out and appearing larger than it really was, from the unsightly brick walls being thickly covered with ivy; a smooth verdant lawn extended down the centre, diversified with flower-beds and evergreen shrubs. On this

lawn opened the French windows of the little room which Mrs. Thornton allowed Laura and Emma to appropriate for their morning studies, and in which she hoped a portion of each day would be usefully and pleasantly employed.

Emma, before she commenced her studies, always put fresh flowers in the pretty china vase which ornamented the centre of their little table: this morning she had gathered a large bunch of white and blue violets, and they filled the apartment with a delicious fragrance. Laura had no sooner spread her books before her than she discovered that this bouquet of violets would be wonderfully improved by the addition of some anemones and garden-primroses. "I will

gather a few and return to my lessons in two minutes," she said. The anemones and primroses were added; Emma was called upon to admire them; and Laura at last opened her books and took up her pen. The morning was now far advanced, and Emma's studies being just finished, Laura felt doubly impatient to conclude hers.

"Do not hurry, Laura," said Emma, good-naturedly, "or you will never do your lessons well. I shall not go out till you, too, are ready. I will sit by the window, and amuse myself with this story-book."

"Thank you, Emma," said Laura, "and pray put your translation out of my reach, for while it lies so temptingly

before me, I can scarcely help copying it, instead of hunting out the words in the dictionary."

In spite of Emma's exhortation, Laura did hurry through her studies with far too little attention. Her exercises were written very incorrectly, and her lessons learned very imperfectly. She felt no satisfaction when her troublesome tasks, as she called them were concluded, for she had conquered no difficulties, and exercised no perseverance.

Mrs. Thornton generally joined her daughters about twelve o'clock, and it was very seldom that Emma's lessons were not in readiness for her mother's inspection. "Her cheerful smile tells me that she has been diligent this morning,"

thought Mrs. Thornton, as she entered the little study—and she guessed rightly. Emma received the affectionate praise her attention to her mama's instruction merited, and which always gave her so much pleasure. As to poor Laura, the gravity, which had displeased her in Emma's countenance in the earlier part of the morning seemed transferred to her own, when her mama's attention was turned to her performances.

“How is this, Laura, again, to-day your lessons are not learned?” said Mrs. Thornton. “I shall begin to grow weary of instructing my little girl, if she continues so indolent and careless.”

“Oh, dear mama,” said Laura, “there can be no occasion to keep learn, learn,

all day. I think we might as well be quite poor persons, if we are to keep working so hard all our lives."

"And how can you, my dear, be sure that your parents will always be as rich as they now are?" said Mrs. Thornton.

"Many who have thought as heedlessly as you now do, and wasted valuable time in trifling pursuits, would, in after-life, gladly have recalled the hours they unprofitably passed in youth. The former possessors of this very house were a sad example of the truth of what I tell you.

"Mr. Nugent was a West India merchant of immense wealth at the time he first came to reside in this neighbourhood. He had two daughters, Emily and

Lousia, who were about my age; and as our families visited, we soon became very intimate friends. They were both very lively, pleasant girls, and were brought up in all the comfort and luxury their father's great wealth could command. They had servants to wait upon them, carriages for their use whenever they required them; and they had only to express a wish to their fond and indulgent parents, and, if possible, it was sure to be gratified. With all the notice taken of them, you may be sure they stood a fair chance of being spoiled. Mrs. Nugent used to lament the trouble that her dear girls were put to in their instruction; for, with all her riches, she knew that patience and perseverance

were the only roads to learning, and she did not wish that her daughters should be inferior in that respect to those of their own rank in life.

“Emily, the elder of my two friends, was a pretty, lively girl, and decidedly the quicker of the two. She could play a little—sing a little; then she understood a little of drawing, and a very little of French and Italian; in fact, a little of almost everything, but nothing well; for, with all her quickness, she had not the steadiness and perseverance of her younger sister. Louisa could not boast so many accomplishments, but what she undertook, she did perfectly.

“I was sitting with them one day when they were at their studies. Emily had

just thrown down her books, impatient of the time it took her to accomplish her lessons. Louisa was steadily pursuing hers, and urging her sister to greater application, when she made nearly the same remark that you did just now, my dear Laura. But time proved which had pursued the wiser course.

“A sudden and quite unlooked-for change in Indian affairs, and the failure of a house in which he was largely interested, completely involved the unfortunate Mr. Nugent. He was obliged to part with every article of luxury, to satisfy the demands of his creditors; and with but a very small portion of his once extensive means, was compelled to retire to a distant part of the country.

“Now it was that Louisa was able to turn her acquirements to the best advantage—to the support and comfort of her family. With her knowledge and accomplishments, she had no difficulty in obtaining an engagement as a governess ; and I question if, at any period of her life, she felt happier than when she brought to her parents the first fruits of her industry.”

“And what did Emily do, mama?” said Laura.

“She now,” said Mrs. Thornton, “saw the folly of her former idleness. She could not use the same means as her sister had done ; for, knowing only a little of many things, she was more suited for a pupil than a preceptress. She was

still young, however; and, by diligent application, she hoped in time to be able to add her portion to the support of her family.

“Before that period arrived, I am happy to say, that, through the kind assistance of some of Mr. Nugent’s friends, he was enabled to regain a sufficient portion of his fortune to place his family, if not in their former affluence, at all events, above the frowns of the world.

“Independent of such considerations as these,” said Mrs. Thornton, “the amusement and pleasure always resulting from a well-stored mind, are of themselves sufficient inducements to perseverance.”

Laura said no further word upon the matter; but the manner in which she applied herself to her studies on the following day, offered the best proof possible that she was convinced of the truth of her mama's reasoning.

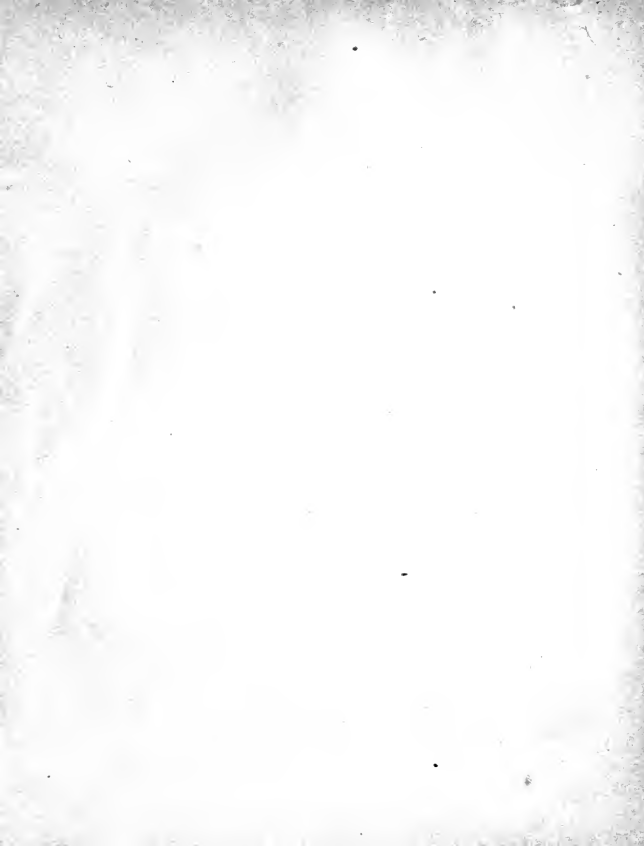
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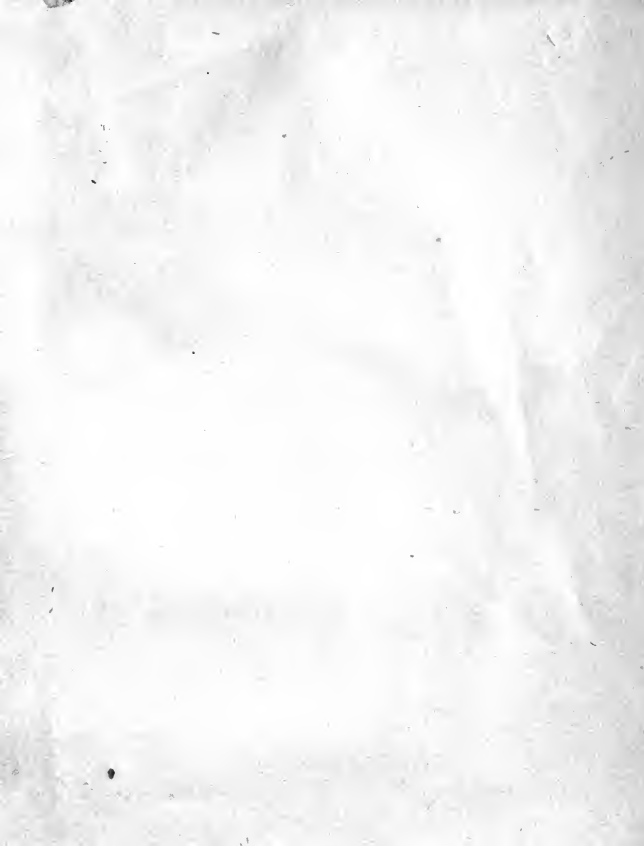
And now, my dear young friends, I must bid you farewell ; but let us hope, that it may only be for a brief period ; for if the perusal of my little tales has contributed to your happiness and amusement, we may, probably, again meet to pass together more
HAPPY HOURS

M. C

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